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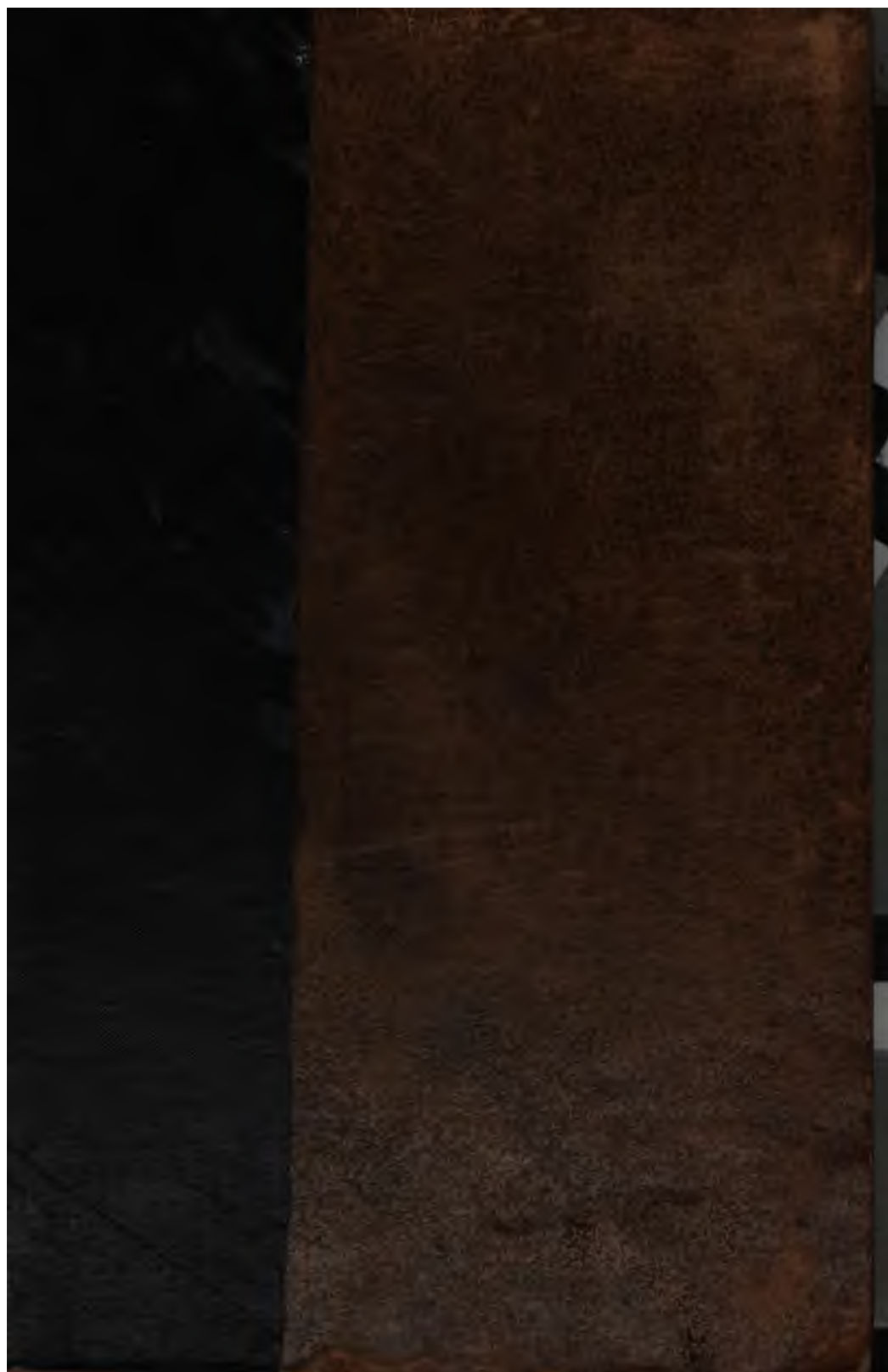
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# JERUSALEM:

A TREATISE ON

## ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY AND JUDAISM.

BY MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY M. SAMUELS,

AUTHOR OF "THE MEMOIRS OF MOSES MENDELSSOHN."

VOL. I.

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*Annette Selman*

TO

ISAAC LYON GOLDSMID, ESQUIRE,  
F.R.S.

A FIRM AND CONSISTENT SUPPORTER OF LIBERAL PRINCIPLES  
BOTH CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS,

THESE VOLUMES  
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY HIS  
OBLIGED AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR



## PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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EVERY nation has its own disposition and exigences, its own notions and aptitudes ; they have their root in its first origin, their substantiality and continuance in its mode of organization ; and as essential properties, they are, therefore, inseparable from its existence. An unbiassed observer of mankind will not look for those properties in things secondary and incidental, nor is it in the general human character that he will frivolously strive to discover the cause of their being ; for there he will find only *Man*,—and not the *Accidental*, the *National*, which distinguishes one set of men from another.

There is not, therefore, any nation which can be pronounced utterly incapable of cultivation, or of improvement and refinement in manners. If it can be proved that the elements of its character were originally good, and that its matter and form suited with its intrinsic worth ; no one will dispute, but that it could only be the particular circumstances in the long vicissitudinous course of its history,

which, having by little and little put the Jewish nation out of its right point of view, have remodelled the whole, and made it appear in an altered, and, not unfrequently, a disadvantageous shape. Remove those disadvantages, and the Jewish polity will at once assume an attitude of dignity and respect. Only the training must go forth from the nation itself; and the germ of self-cultivation must expand itself anew, else all our endeavours will be fruitless. Salutary effects may only then be reasonably expected, when innate though dormant powers are stimulated afresh; then shall we have the pleasure of beholding in the great garden of God, the flower, once ready to sink down, bloom again, raise her drooping head, and go on flourishing by the side of—and in the best harmony with—her sparkling sisters: whereas foreign cultivation, or that introduced from without, whether forced on or borrowed, would either annihilate her altogether, or at least suppress and deform her. Neither individual man nor entire nations will admit of being re-fashioned after foreign patterns. Organizing Nature has assigned to every kind of matter, as well as to every climate, its particular capabilities and productions; and Art can effect nothing except it fall back upon the indigenous soil.

Hence the great men of all nations, once seized

with the ardour of perfecting their contemporaries, have founded their intended improvements on maxims already extant. Acquainted with the human heart, they considered it a paramount duty to be as tender as possible, with that which was held most sacred by the people they had to deal with. The old was merely made to assume a more modern form, and, by a new and better appearance, which they well knew how to give it, adapted to their noble design, in conformity to times and local situations. They did not despotically deviate from whatsoever was generally recognized, and generally venerated; it was not everything that they condemned and arbitrarily declared unfit; that only which was really harmful, which outraged God and man, they vigorously sought to put down. Detrimental abuses hallowed by superstition, erroneous opinions leading astray, immoral proceedings varnished over by zealots with the colour of religion, were marked as infirmities in social man, and removed on account of their noxiousness. It was thus that those Philosophers succeeded in becoming useful to the age they lived in, knowing, like a certain Rabbi,\* wisely to separate the bitter husk from

\* Talmud tells us that Rabbi Meir, who had himself a great number of scholars, whom he instructed in the Law, nevertheless visited every day his own former teacher, to whom he was in-

the savoury kernel. And if the excellent axioms which they strove to diffuse were not received with equal alacrity everywhere, yet time has vindicated the tendency of their undertaking, upon the whole; while posterity is ejaculating thanks and blessings on the memory of those guardian angels of humanity.\*

There was a time when the Hebrew people, faithful to the bliss-fraught religion of their forefathers, could count themselves among the happiest

debted for education, accomplishment, and knowledge, in order still to learn from him much of what was good and useful, although the latter had been long known as an apostate who had forsaken the Law.—Rabbi Meir's Pupils, to whom their Professor's tolerant spirit as well as his converse with what they esteemed a depraved person, seemed highly pernicious, expressed to him their surprise at it. "I found a savoury nut," replied he, "of which I keep the kernel, and throw away the shell."

• Nor did Providence fall short in its liberality, in this respect, to the Hebrew nation; but bestowed on it meritorious characters who, with love of truth, vanquishing all fear of man, and frequently at no small sacrifice, took care to introduce a more eligible way of thinking amongst their co-religionists, and thus wrought good, as far as their limited sphere would permit. The names of *Maimonides*, *Aben Ezra*, *Manasseh Ben Israel*, &c. &c. are indelibly fixed in the memory of the Hebrew nation; their works are replete with instructive truths and useful information.

I shall have frequent occasion, in the course of this work, both to quote the writings of those great men, and to insert sketches of their lives, and leading characteristics.

nations on earth. Manners and customs then qualified them as a people consecrated to God, who by their moral and political constitution most gloriously distinguished themselves from any other nation then existing. At that happy period it was, that, favoured by temporary circumstances, the Israelitish people attained a certain high degree of perfection, nationality exalting itself to general philanthropy, while, under the auspices of a pacific Monarch, the salutary effect of peace to the nation failed not to manifest itself. With that wisdom which the pious idea of an eternal and universal Father alone could support, they widened the horizon, and enlarged their sympathies for those of a different opinion;\* and toleration, content, peace and happiness, pervaded the mind of the nation. And whence did they derive that pious spirit? From Religion; from her who, throughout, lays the greatest stress on brotherly love and the moral worth of man; from her, with whom reason and eternal truth, virtue and justice, are the main rule and constant aim.

But not only to the flourishing house of Jacob, did Religion offer tenets and laws conducive to salvation; in her there are, besides, peculiar comforting and encouraging promises to the dispersed

\* I scarcely need refer to the tolerant prayer offered up by King Solomon at the Dedication of the Temple.



flock of Israel. When the national independence ceased, and the emigrant members of the nation wandered about all parts of the world, they took away with them, of all their treasures, nothing but their religion. She wandered with them in all directions; with her, those poor victims of tyranny sought and found aid and consolation. Despite of all scoffing and contumely, despite of the many persecutions they had to endure for her sake, they continued true to her, the more true, the greater the cruelties exercised toward them.

After overcoming many sufferings, after various revolting and barbarous treatment, which rendered mankind more and more hateful to those tormented men, they returned into the bosom of the *Divine One*, there to gather fresh strength, fresh resolution, firmly to encounter still more cruel destinies lowering with crushing weight over their heads.—But wherefore these gloomy pictures of former ages? The noble-minded turn away disgustingly from these appalling scenes, to where more agreeable objects tempt their view. Then let me throw a veil over this horrid part, and skip that page in the records of our hapless ancestors, lest I should again depress our spirits now raised by modern and better scenes to the most pleasing expectation. A new

chapter commences in the history of the Jews, opening with gladder events and becoming more and more cheerful and pleasant as it proceeds. The minds of most nations are now regulated by *the rules of Equity*; the iron barrier which separated the hearts of men for thousands of years past, the spirit of toleration has pulled down. *Humanity* is the watchword sounding from every tongue, and approximating to each other the hearts of all men. On the Jewish nation, too, this change is exerting a very salutary influence. Men begin to think of, and feel sympathy for, the Jew, being well aware of the wrong done him in former ages, by debarring him from his just share of the common stock of humanity; well aware of the *aggravated* wrong done him, in ousting him, at the same time, from the means whereby he might participate of that common stock. Thank God! the times are over, when the ideas of *Jew* and *Man* were considered heterogeneous. The Jew, too, now feels his worth as a man; and he feels it with thanks to his fellowmen. His inner consciousness tells him that he too is destined by nature to apply his faculties for the welfare of the whole.

But all the obstacles are not removed yet. The wild bee of raw uncultivated ages has left a dangerous sting behind in innermost mankind, which cannot be extracted but with the wisest caution.

On the one part, they think they have discovered in the Jews' system of conduct, nothing but immoral motives, and absolutely set them down as an isolated set of men. On the other hand, much remains yet to be done; many a notion wants refining: much of what is defective requires to be supplied; and a world of misapprehension to be explained and set to rights.

To elucidate the foregoing assertions by historical and literary data, is in a great measure the object of the present undertaking, which, as far as the "Jerusalem" is concerned, I had been advised twelve years ago to consign to the press, by several individuals who honored my "Memoirs of Moses Mendelssohn" with their approbation. Now the want of leisure, which then prevented me from following their suggestion has, alas! changed into too great an abundance, and I have deemed it expedient, in presenting a translation of "Jerusalem" to the British Public, to accompany the same with those publications which were the cause of that extraordinary production, some of which have become very scarce; and to add thereto, in the form of notes, a selection of the most approved articles by several Jewish authors, all more or less connected with, or bearing on the main subject. Perhaps it may be as well here to observe to the generality of my readers of either

religious persuasion, that, in the character of a Disciple, as I fairly may be supposed to be, of the leading system of this work, I do not (with the exception of a very few interspersed remarks of my own), by any means hold myself accountable for every thesis, doctrine, or opinion, broached or laid down in the same. Too obscure for a censor, too timid for a reformer, and too conscious of my own defects for a satirist, my ambition, in this instance, soars no higher than the hope of having furnished a tolerable translation ; and even in this I may be disappointed, unless, on being arraigned for innacuracy of style, an indulgent Public would, in extenuation, admit my plea : that I am not—what, without any disparagement of my own country, I should esteem an honour—a native of this.

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# VINDICIÆ JUDÆORUM:

OR,

A LETTER IN ANSWER TO CERTAIN QUESTIONS PRO-  
POUNDED BY A NOBLE AND LEARNED GENTLEMAN,  
TOUCHING THE REPROACHES CAST ON THE  
NATION OF THE JEWS; WHEREIN ALL  
OBJECTIONS ARE CANDIDLY AND  
YET FULLY CLEARED.

BY RABBI MANASSEH BEN ISRAEL,

A DIVINE AND A PHYSICIAN.

PRINTED IN 1656.



## VINDICIÆ JUDÆORUM.

*Most Noble and Learned Sir,*

I HAVE received a letter from your worship, which was welcome to me; and I read it, because yours, with great delight, if you will please to allow for the unpleasantness of the subject. For I do assure your worship, I never met with anything in my life which I did more deeply resent, for that it reflects upon the credit of a Nation, which amongst so many calumnies, so manifest (and therefore shameful) I dare to pronounce innocent. Yet I am afraid, that whilst I answer to them, I shall offend some, whose zeal will not permit them to consider that self-vindication, as defensive arms, is natural to all; but to be wholly silent, were to acknowledge what is so falsely objected. Wherefore, that I may justify myself to my own conscience, I have obeyed your worship's commands; for your request must not be accounted less, at least by me. I presume your worship cannot expect either prolix or polite discourses upon so sad a subject; for who can be



ambitious in his own calamity? I have therefore despatched only some concise and brief relations, barely exceeding the bounds of a letter: yet such as may suffice you, to inform the rulers of the English nation of a truth most real and sincere, which I hope they will accept in good part, according to their noble and singular prudence and piety. For innocence being always most free from suspecting evil, I cannot be persuaded, that any one hath either spoken or written against us, out of any particular hatred that they bare us, but that they rather supposed our coming might prove prejudicial to their estates and interests, charity always beginning at home. Yet, notwithstanding, I propounded this matter under an argument of profit (for this hath made us welcome in other countries), and therefore I hope I may prove what I undertake. However, I have but small encouragement to expect the happy attainment of any other design, but only that truth may be justified of her children. I shall answer in order to what your worship hath proposed

#### THE FIRST SECTION.

AND in the first place, I cannot but weep bitterly, and with much anguish of soul lament, that strange and horrid accusation of some Christians against the dispersed and afflicted Jews

that dwell among them, when they say (what I tremble to write) that the Jews are wont to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, fermenting it with the blood of some Christians whom they have for that purpose killed: when the calumniators themselves have most barbarously and cruelly butchered some of them, or, to speak more mildly, have found one dead, and cast the corpse, as if it had been murdered by the Jews, into their houses or yards, as lamentable experience hath proved in sundry places: and then with unbridled rage and tumult they accuse the innocent Jews, as the committers of this most execrable fact: which detested wickedness hath been sometimes perpetrated, that they might thereby take advantage to exercise their cruelty upon them; and sometimes to justify and patronize their massacres already executed.. But how far this accusation is from any semblable appearance of truth, your worship may judge by these following arguments.

1. It is utterly forbid the Jews to eat any manner of blood whatsoever, Levit. vii, 26, and Deut. xii, where it is expressly said, וְכָל־דָּם “And ye shall eat no manner of blood;” and in obedience to this command, the Jews eat not the blood of any animal. And more than this, if they find one drop of blood in an egg, they cast it away as prohibited.

And if, in eating a piece of bread, it happens to touch any blood drawn from the teeth or gums, it must be pared and cleansed from the said blood, as it evidently appears in *Sulhan Haruch*, and our ritual book. Since, then, it is thus, how can it enter into any man's heart to believe that they should eat human blood, which is yet more detestable; there being scarce any nation now remaining upon the earth so barbarous as to commit such wickedness?

2. The precept in the Decalogue, "Thou shalt not kill," is of general extent; it is a moral command. So that the Jews are bound not only not to kill one of those nations where they live, but they are also obliged, by the law of gratitude, to love them. They are the very words of Rabbi Moses of Egypt in *Yad Hachazaka*, in his Treatise of Kings, the tenth chapter, in the end: "Concerning the nations, the ancients have commanded us to visit their sick, and to bury their dead, as the dead of Israel, and to relieve and maintain their poor, as we do the poor of Israel, because of the ways of peace; as it is written, 'God is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works,' Psal. cxlv. 9." And in conformity hereto, I witness before God (blessed for ever,) that I have continually seen in Amsterdam, where I reside, abundance of good correspondence, many interchanges of brotherly affection, and sun-

dry things of reciprocal love. I have thrice seen, when some Flemish Christians have fallen into the river in our ward called Flemburgh, our nation cast themselves into the river to them, to help them out and to deliver their lives from death. And certainly he that will thus hazard himself to save another, cannot harbour so much cruel malice as to kill the innocent, whom he ought out of the duty of humanity to defend and protect.

3. It is forbid, Exod. xxi, 20. to kill a stranger: "If a man smite his servant, or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall surely be punished; notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished, for he is his money." The text speaks of a servant that is one of the Gentile nations, because that he only is said to be the money of the Jew, who is his master, as Aben Ezra well notes upon the place. And the Lord commands, that if he die under the hands of his master, his master shall be put to death; for that as it seems he struck him with a murderous intent. But it is otherwise if the servant dies afterwards; for then it appears, that he did not strike him with a purpose to kill him; for if so, he would have killed him out of hand: wherefore he shall be free, and it may suffice for punishment that he hath lost his money. If therefore a Jew cannot kill his servant or slave that is one of the nations,

according to the law, how much less shall he be empowered to murder him that is not his enemy, and with whom he leads a quiet and peaceable life? And therefore how can any good man believe that, against his holy law, a Jew (in a strange country especially) should make himself guilty of so execrable a fact?

4. Admit that it were lawful (which God forbid!), why should they eat the blood? And supposing they should eat the blood, why should they eat it on the Passover? Here, at this feast, every confection ought to be so pure, as not to admit of any leaven, or anything that may fermentate, which certainly blood doth.

5. If the Jews did repute and hold this action (which is never to be named without an epithet of horror) necessary, they would not expose themselves to so imminent a danger, to so cruel and more deserved punishment, unless they were moved to it by some divine precept, or at least some constitution of their wise men. Now we challenge all those men who entertain this dreadful opinion of us, as obliged, in point of justice, to cite the place of scripture, or of the Rabbins, where any such precept or doctrine is delivered. And until they do so, we will assume so much liberty, as to conclude it to be no better than a malicious slander.

6. If a man, to save his life, may break the Sabbath, and transgress many of the other commands of the law, as hath been determined in the Talmud, as also confirmed by Rabbi Moses of Egypt, in the fifth chapter of his Treatise of the Fundamentals of the Law; yet three are excepted, which are Idolatry, Murder and Adultery, life not being to be purchased at so dear a rate, as the committing of these heinous sins; an innocent death being infinitely to be preferred before it. Wherefore, if the killing of a Christian, as they object, were a divine precept and institution (which far be it from me to conceive), it were certainly to be annulled and rendered void; since a man cannot perform it, without endangering his own life,—and not only so, but the life of the whole congregation of an entire people: and yet more, since it is directly a violation of one of those three precepts, “Thou shalt do no murder,” which is intended universally of all men, as we have said before.

7. The Lord (blessed for ever) by his prophet Jeremiah, xxix, 7. gives it in command to the captive Israelites that were dispersed among the Heathens, that they should continually pray for, and endeavour the peace, welfare and prosperity of the city wherein they dwelt, and the inhabitants thereof. This the Jews have always done, and

continue to this day in all their synagogues, with a particular blessing of the prince or magistrate under whose protection they live. And this the Right Honourable my Lord St. John can testify, who, when he was ambassador to the Lords the States of the United Provinces, was pleased to honour our synagogue at Amsterdam with his presence, where our nation entertained him with music, and all expressions of joy and gladness, and also pronounced a blessing, not only upon his Honour then present, but upon the whole commonwealth of England, for that they were a people in league and amity, and because we conceived some hopes that they would manifest towards us, what we ever bear towards them, viz. all love and affection. But to return again to our argument, if we are bound to study, endeavour and solicit, the good and flourishing estate of the city where we live and the inhabitants thereof, how shall we then murder their children, who are the greatest good, and the most flourishing blessing that this life doth indulge to them?

8. The children of Israel are naturally merciful, and full of compassion. This was acknowledged by their enemies, 1 Kings xx, 31, when Ben-hadad, king of Assyria was discomfited in the battle, and fled away, he became a petitioner for his life to King Ahab, who had conquered him; for he

understood that the kings of the House of Israel were merciful kings: and his own experience confirmed it, when for a little affection that he pretended in a compliment, he obtained again his life and fortunes, from which the event of the war had disentitled him. And when the Gibeonites made that cruel request to David, that seven of Saul's sons, who were innocent, should be delivered unto them, the prophet says, "Now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel." 2 Sam. xxi.

2. As if he had said, in this cruelty, the piety of the Israelites is not so much set forth as the tyranny and implacable rage of the Gentiles, the Gibeonites; which being so, and experience withal declares it, viz. the fidelity which our nation hath inviolably preserved towards their superiors; then most certainly it is wholly incompatible and inconsistent with the murdering of their children.

9. There are some Christians, that use to insult the Jews as Christian homicides, that will venture to give a reason of these pretended murderous practices: as if the accusation were then most infallibly true, if they can find any semblance of a reason why it might be so. As they say, that this is practised by them in hatred and detestation of Jesus of Nazareth; and that therefore they steal Christian children, buffetting them in



the same manner that he was buffeted, thereby to rub up and revive the memory of the aforesaid death. And likewise they imagine that the Jews secretly steal away crosses, crucifixes, and such like graven images, which Papists privately and carefully retain in their houses; and every day the Jews mainly strike, and buffet, shamefully spitting on them, with suchlike ceremonies of despite, and all this in hatred of Jesus. But I admire what they really think, when they object such things as these, laying them to our charge: for surely we cannot believe that a people, otherwise of sufficient prudence and judgment, can persuade themselves into an opinion that the Jews should commit such practices, unless they could conceive they did them in honour and obedience to the God whom they worship. And what kind of obedience is this they perform to God (blessed for ever), when they directly sin against that special command, "Thou shalt not kill"? Besides, this cannot be committed without the imminent and manifest peril of their lives and fortunes, and the necessary exposing themselves to a just revenge. Moreover, it is an anathema to a Jew to have any graven images in his house, or anything of an idol, which any of the nations figuratively worship, Deut. vii. 26.

10. Matthew Paris, p. 532, writes, that in

the year 1243, the Jews circumcised a Christian child at Norwich, and gave him the name *Jurnin*. and reserved him to be crucified, for which cause many of them were most cruelly put to death. The untruth of this story will evidently appear, upon the consideration of its circumstances. He was first circumcised; and this perfectly constitutes him a Jew. Now for a Jew to embrace a Christian in his arms, and foster him in his bosom, is a testimony of great love and affection. But if it was intended that shortly after, this child should be crucified, to what end was he first circumcised? If it shall be said, it was out of hatred to the Christians, it appears rather, to the contrary, that it proceeded from detestation of the Jews, or of them who had newly become proselytes to embrace the Jewish religion. Surely this supposed prank (storied to be done in Popish times) looks more like a piece of the real scene of the Popish Spaniards' piety, who first baptized the poor Indians, and afterwards, out of cruel pity to their souls, inhumanly butchered them, than of strict law-observing Jews, who dare not make a sport of one of the seals of their covenant.

11. Our captivity under the Mahometans is far more burdensome and grievous than under the Christians; and so our ancients have said, "It is better to inhabit under Edom than Ismael," for

they are a people more civil and rational, and of a better policy, as our nation have found experimentally. For, excepting the nobler and better sort of Jews, such as live in the court of Constantinople, the vulgar people of the Jews, that are dispersed in other countries of the Mahometan empire, in Asia and Africa, are treated with abundance of contempt and scorn.\* It would therefore follow, if this sacrificing of children be the product and result of hatred, that they should execute and disgorge it much more upon the Mahometans, who have reduced them to so great calamity and misery. So that if it be necessary to the celebration of the passover, why do they not as well kill a Mahometan? But although the Jews are scattered and dispersed throughout all those vast

\* In the present times, it may be true that, in Christian states, the condition of the Jews is better than in Mahometan; but in the latter, they have never been so cruelly persecuted, murdered, tormented, burnt, despoiled of their all, and driven out in a state of nakedness, as they were by the Christian governments, and ministers of religion in the middle ages. Even now, the Jews pay but a moderate poll-tax, in the Turkish territories, and endure not much more than the other inhabitants, or than is concomitant with the despotic government. The number of Jews in the Mahometan states, probably, is greater than in the Christian. It is there, that they more frequently attain wealth and distinction by excelling as physicians, or even statesmen. The present prime-minister of the Emperor of Morocco is a Jew, named Sumbul.

territories, notwithstanding all their despite against us, they never yet, to this day, forged such a calumnious accusation. Wherefore it appears plainly, that it is nothing else but a slander, and such a one, that, considering how the scene is laid, I cannot easily determine whether it speak more of malice, or of folly : certainly Sultan Selim made himself very merry with it, when the story was related him by Moses Amon, his chief physician.

12. If all that which hath been said is not of sufficient force to wipe off this accusation, because the matter on our part is purely negative, and so cannot be cleared by evidence of witnesses, I am constrained to use another way of argument, which the Lord (blessed for ever) prescribed, Exod. xxii, which is an oath : wherefore I swear, without any deceit or fraud, by the most high God, the creator of heaven and earth, who promulged his law to the people of Israel upon mount Sinai, that I never yet to this day saw any such custom among the people of Israel, and that they do not hold any such thing by divine precept of the law, or any ordinance or institution of their wise men, and that they never committed or endeavoured such wickedness (that I know, or have credibly heard, or read in any Jewish authors), and if I lie in this matter, then let all the curses mentioned in Leviticus and Deuteronomy come upon me; let me

never see the blessings and consolations of Zion, nor attain to the resurrection of the dead. By this I hope I may have proved what I did intend ; and certainly this may suffice all the friends of truth, and all faithful Christians, to give credit to what I have here averred. And, indeed, our adversaries, who have been a little more learned, and consequently a little more civil than the vulgar, have made a halt at this imputation. John Hoornbeek in that book which he lately writ against our nation, wherein he hath objected against us, right or wrong, all that he could anyways scrape together, was, notwithstanding, ashamed to lay this at our door, in his *Prolegomena*, p. 26. where he says, “ *An autem verum sit quod vulgo in historiis legatur, &c.*” i. e. “ Whether that be true, which is commonly read in histories, to aggravate the Jews’ hatred against the Christians, or rather the Christians against the Jews, that they should annually, upon the preparation of the passover, after a cruel manner, sacrifice a Christian child, privily stolen, in disgrace and contempt of Christ, whose passion and crucifixion the Christians celebrate, I will not assert for truth : as well knowing, how easy it was for those times, wherein these things are mentioned to have happened (especially after the Inquisition was set up in the popedom,) to forge and feign ; and how the histories of those ages, according to

the affection of the writers, were too much addicted and given unto fables and figments. Indeed I have never yet seen any of all those relations that hath by any certain experiment proved this fact; for they are all founded either upon the uncertain report of the vulgar, or else upon the secret accusation of the monks belonging to the inquisition, not to mention the avarice of the informers, wickedly hankering after the Jews' wealth, and so with ease forging any wickedness. For in the first book of the Sicilian Constitutions, tit. 7. we see the Emperor Frederick saying, '*Si vero Judæus vel Saracenus sit, in quibus, prout certo perpendimus, Christianorum persecutio multum abundat ad præsens;*' 'But if he be a Jew or a Saracen, against whom, as we have weighed, the persecution of the Christians doth much abound, &c' thus taxing the violence of certain Christians against the Jews. Or if perhaps it hath sometimes happened, that a Christian was killed by a Jew, we must not therefore say that in all places where they inhabit, they annually kill a Christian child. And for that which Thomas Cantiprætensis, lib. ii, cap. 23, affirms, viz. that it is certainly known, that the Jews every year, in every province, cast lots what city or town shall afford Christian blood to the other cities; I can give it no more credit

than his other fictions and lies wherewith he hath stuffed his book." Thus far John Hoornbeek.

13. Notwithstanding all this, there are not wanting some histories that relate these and the like calumnies against an afflicted people: for which cause the Lord saith, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of my eye." Zech. ii. 6. I shall cursorily mention some passages that have occurred in my time, whereof I say not that I was an eye-witness, but only that they were of general report and credence, without the least contradiction. I have faithfully noted both the names of the persons, the places where, and the time when they happened, in my continuation of Flavius Josephus; I shall be the less curious therefore in reciting them here. In Vienna, the metropolis of Austria, Frederick being emperor, there was a pond frozen, according to the cold of those parts, wherein three boys (as it too frequently happens) were drowned. When they were missed, the imputation was cast upon the Jews; and they were incontinently indicted for murdering them to celebrate their passover. And being imprisoned, after infinite prayers and supplications made to no effect, three hundred of them were burnt. When the pond thawed, these three boys were found, and then their innocency was clearly

evinced, although too late, after the execution of this cruelty.

In Saragoza, about thirty years ago, there was a Christian woman, into whose house there came a little girl (of eleven years of age, daughter to a neighbouring gentleman), richly adorned with jewels: this wretched woman, not thinking of a safer way to rob her than by killing her, cut her throat, and hid her under her bed. The girl was presently missed; and by information they understood that she was seen to go into that house. They call a magistrate to search the house; and find the girl dead. She confessed the fact; and as if she should have expiated her own guilt by destroying a Jew, though ever so innocent, she said she did it at the instigation and persuasion of one Isaac Jeshurun, for that the Jews wanted blood to celebrate their feast. She was hanged, and the Jew was apprehended, who being six times cruelly tortured, (they employing their wits in inventing unheard-of and insufferable torments, such as might gain Perillus the estimation of merciful and compassionate,) still cries out of the falsehood of the accusation, saying, that that wickedness which he never committed, no not so much as in his dreams, was maliciously imputed to him; yet, notwithstanding, he was condemned to remain close prisoner for twenty years (though he continued there only



three), and to be fed there through a trough, upon the bread and water of affliction, being close manacled, and naked, within a four-square wall built for that purpose, that he might there perish in his own dung. This man's brother, Joseph Jeshurun, is now living at this time in Hamburg. This miserable man calling upon God, beseeching him to show some signal testimony of his innocence, and citing before his divine tribunal the senators, who had, with no more mercy than justice, thus grievously and inhumanly afflicted him, the blessed God was a just judge; for the prince died suddenly at a banquet, the Sunday next ensuing the giving of the sentence: and during the time of his imprisonment, the aforesaid senators by little and little dropt away, and died, which was prudently observed by those few that yet remained; wherefore they resolved to deliver themselves by restoring him to his liberty, accounting it as a particular divine providence. This man came out well, passed throughout all Italy, where he was seen, to the admiration of all that had cognizance of his sufferings, and died a few years since at Jerusalem.

14. The Act of the Faith, (which is ordinarily done at Toledo) was done at Madrid, Anno 1632, in the presence of the King of Spain, where the inquisitors did then take an oath of the King and

Queen, that they should maintain and conserve the Catholick faith in their dominions. In this act it is found printed, how that a family of our nation was burnt, for confessing upon the rack, the truth of a certain accusation of a maid-servant, who (provoked out of some disgust) said, that they had scourged and whipped an image, which by the frequent lashes issued forth a great deal of blood, and crying with an out-stretched voice, said unto them, "Why do you thus cruelly scourge me?" The whole nobility well understood that it was all false; but things of the Inquisition all must hush.

15. A very true story happened at Lisbon, Anno 1631. A certain church missed one night, a silver pix or box, wherein was the Popish Host. And, forasmuch as they had seen a young youth of our nation, whose name was Simao Pires Solis, sufficiently noble, to pass by the same night not far from thence, who went to visit a lady, he was apprehended, imprisoned, and terribly tortured. They cut off his hands, and after they had dragged him along the streets, burnt him. One year passed over, and a thief at the foot of the gallows, confessed how he himself had rifled and plundered the shrine of the host, and not that poor innocent whom they had burnt. This young man's brother was a friar, a great theologian and a preacher;

he lives now a Jew in Amsterdam, and calls himself Eliazar de Solis.

16. Some perhaps will say, that men are not blame-worthy for imputing to the Jews that which they themselves with their own mouths have confessed. But surely he hath little understanding of racks and tortures that speaks thus. An Earl of Portugal, when his physician was imprisoned for being a Jew, requested one of the Inquisitors by letter, that he would cause him to be set at liberty, for that he knew for certain that he was a very good Christian ; but he, not being able to undergo the tortures inflicted on him, confessed himself a Jew and became a Penitentiary. At which the Earl, being much incensed, feigns himself sick, and desires the Inquisitor, by one of his servants, that he would be pleased to come and visit him. When he came, he commanded him that he should confess that himself was a Jew, and further, that he should put it down in writing with his own hand ; which when he refused to do, he charges some of his servants to put a helmet that was red-hot in the fire (provided for this purpose) upon his head ; at which he, not being able to endure this threatened torment, takes him aside to confess ; and also he writ with his own hand that he was a Jew. Whereupon the Earl takes occasion to

reprove his injustice, cruelty and inhumanity, saying, "In like manner as you have confessed, did my physician confess; besides that, you have presently only out of fear, not sense of torment, confessed more." For this cause, in the Israelitish senate no torture was ever inflicted, but only every person was convicted at the testimony of two witnesses. That such-like instruments of cruelty may enforce children that have been tenderly educated, and fathers that have lived deliciously, to confess that they have whipped an image, and been guilty of such-like criminal offences, daily experience may demonstrate.

17. Others will perchance allege, these are histories indeed; but they are not sacred or canonical. I answer, "Love and hatred," says Plutarch, "corrupt the truth of every thing, as experience sufficiently declares it; when we see that which comes to pass, that one and the same thing, in one and the same city, at one and the same time, is related in different manners. I myself, in my own negociation here, have found it so. For it hath been rumoured abroad, that our nation had purchased St. Paul's church, for to make it their synagogue, notwithstanding it was a temple formerly consecrated to Diana. And many other things have been reported of us, that never entered into the thoughts of our nation; as I have seen a

fabulous narrative of the proceedings of a great council of the Jews, assembled in the plain of Ageda in Hungary, to determine whether the Messiah were come or no.

18. And now, since it is evident that it is forbidden the Jews to eat any manner of blood, and that to kill a man is directly prohibited by our law, and the reasons before given are consentaneous and agreeable to every one's understanding; I know it will be inquired by many, but especially by those who are more pious and the friends of truth, how this calumny did arise, and from whence it derived its first original. I may answer, that this wickedness is laid to their charge for divers reasons.

First. Rufinus the familiar friend of St. Jerome, in his version of Josephus's second book that he wrote against Apion the grammarian (for the Greek text is there wanting), tells us how Apion invented this slander to gratify Antiochus, to excuse his sacrilege, and justify his perfidious dealing with the Jews, making their estates supply his wants. "Propheta vero aliorum est Apion, &c." "Apion is become a prophet, and says that Antiochus found in the temple a bed, with a man lying upon it, and a table set before him, furnished with all dainties both of sea and land, and fowls; and that this man was astonished at them, and

presently adores the entrance of the king, as coming to succour and relieve him ; and prostrating himself at his knees, and stretching out his right hand, he implores liberty : whereat the king commanding him to set down and declare who he was, why he dwelt there, and what was the cause of this his plentiful provision, the man with sighs and tears lamentably weeps out his necessity, and tells him he is a Grecian, and whilst he travelled about the province to get food, he was suddenly apprehended, and caught up by some strange men, and brought to the temple, and there shut up, that he might be seen by no man, but there be fattened with all manner of dainties ; and that these unexpected benefits wrought in him at first joy, then suspicion, after that astonishment ; and last of all, advising with the minister that came unto him, he understood that the Jews every year, at a certain time appointed, according to their secret and ineffable law, take up some Greek stranger, and after he hath been fed delicately for the space of a whole year, they bring him into a certain wood, and kill him. Then, according to their solemn rites and ceremonies, they sacrifice his body, and every one tasting of his entrails, in the offering up of this Greek, they enter into a solemn oath, that they will bear an immortal feud and hatred to the Greeks. And then they cast the relics of this perishing

man into a certain pit. After this, Apion makes him to say, that only some few days remained to him before his execution, and to desire the king that he, fearing and worshipping the Grecian Gods, would revenge the blood of his subjects upon the Jews, and deliver him from his approaching death. "This fable (saith Josephus), as it is most full of all tragedy, so it abounds with cruel impudence." I had rather you should read the confutation of this slander there, than I to write it in this place. You will find it in the Geneva edition of Josephus, p. 1066.

Secondly. The very same accusation and horrid wickedness of killing children and eating their blood, was of old by the ancient Heathens charged upon the Christians, that thereby they might make them odious, and incense the common people against them, Tertullian, in his *Apologia contra Gentes*, Justin Martyr in *Apologia 2 ad Anton.* Eusebius *Cæsariensis*, l. v, cap. 1 and 4. Pineda, in his *Monarchia Ecclesiastica*, l. xi. cap. 52. and many others, as is known sufficiently. So that the imputation of this cruelty, which as to them continues only in memory, is to the very same purpose at this day charged upon the Jews. And as they deny this fact, as being falsely charged upon them, so in like manner do we deny it; and I may say perhaps with a little more reason, forasmuch as

we eat not any manner of blood, wherein they do not think themselves obliged.

Now the reason of this slander was always the covetous ambition of some, who, desiring to gain their wealth and possess themselves of their estates, have forged and introduced this enormous accusation, to colour their wickedness under the specious pretence of revenging their own blood. And to this purpose, I remember that when I reprov'd a Rabbi (who came out of Poland to Amsterdam) for the excess of usury in Germany and Poland, which they exacted of the Christians, and told him how moderate they in Holland and in Italy were; he replied, "we are of necessity constrained to do so, because they so often raise up false witnesses against us, and levy more from us at once, than we are able to get again by them in many years." And so, as experience shews, it usually succeeds with our poor people under this pretext and colour.

19. And so it hath been divers times; men mischieving the Jews to excuse their own wickedness; as to instance one precedent in the time of a certain king of Portugal. The Lord (blessed for ever), took away his sleep one night (as he did King Ahashuerus) and he went up into a balcony in the palace, from whence he could discover the whole city, and from thence (the moon shining



clear) he espied two men carrying a dead corpse, which he cast into a Jew's yard. He presently dispatches a couple of servants, and commands them, yet with a seeming carelessness, they should trace and follow those men, and take notice of their house ; which they accordingly did. The next day there is a hurly-burly and a tumult in the city, accusing the Jews of murder. Thereupon the king apprehends these rogues, and they confess the truth ; and considering that this business was guided by a particular divine providence, he calls some of the wise men of the Jews, and asks them how they translate the fourth verse of the 121st Psalm ; and they answered, " Behold he that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." The king replied, " If he will not slumber, then much less will he sleep ; you do not say well, for the true translation is, ' Behold the Lord doth not slumber, neither will he suffer him that keepeth Israel to sleep.' God who hath yet a care over you, hath taken away my sleep, that I might be an eye-witness of that wickedness which is this day laid to your charge." This, with many such like relations, we may read in the book called *Shebet Jehuda*, how sundry times, when our nation was at the very brink of destruction for such forged slanders, the truth hath discovered itself for their deliverance.

20. This matter of blood hath been heretofore discussed and disputed before one of the Popes at a full council, where it was determined to be nothing else but a mere calumny: and hereupon he gave liberty to the Jews to dwell in his countries, and gave the princes of Italy to understand the same, as also Alfonso the wise, king of Spain. And suppose any one man had done such a thing, as I believe never any Jew did so, yet this were great cruelty to punish a whole nation for one man's wickedness.

21. But why should I use more words about this matter, seeing all that is come upon us was foretold by all the prophets? Moses, Deut. xxviii, 61. "Moreover, every sickness and every plague which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, &c. because thou hast not hearkened to the voice of the Lord thy God." David, in the xliv Psalm, makes a doleful complaint of those evils and ignominious reproaches wherewith we are environed round about in this captivity, as if we were the proper centre of misery; saying, "For thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." The same he speaks in Psalm lxxiv, and in other Psalms.

Ezekiel more particularly mentions this calumny; God (blessed for ever) promising, Chap. xxxvi, 13.

that in time to come, the devouring of men, or the eating of man's blood shall no more be imputed to them, according to the true and proper exposition of the learned Don Isaac Abarbanel. The blessed God, according to the multitude of his mercies, will have compassion upon his people, and will take away the reproach of Israel from off the earth, that it may be no more heard, as is prophesied by Isaiah. And let this suffice to have spoken as to this point.

#### THE SECOND SECTION.

YOUR worship desired jointly to know what ceremony or humiliation the Jews use in their synagogues, toward the Book of the Law; for which they are by some ignorantly reputed to be idolaters I shall answer it in order.

. First. The Jews hold themselves bound to stand up when the Book of the Law written upon parchment is taken out of the desk, until it is opened on the pulpit, to show it to the people, and afterwards to be read. We see that observed in Nehemiah viii. 6, where it is said, "And when he had opened it, all the people stood up." And this they do in reverence to the word of God, and that sacred book.

For the same cause, when it passes from the

desk toward the pulpit, all that it passes by, bow down their heads a little with reverence; which can be no idolatry, for these following reasons.

First. It is one thing, *adorare*, to adore; and another, *venerari*, to worship. For adoration is forbidden to any creature, whether angelical or earthly; but worship may be given to either of them, as to men of a higher rank, commonly styled worshipful. And so Abraham, who in his time rooted out vain idolatry, humbled himself, and also prostrated himself before those three guests, which then he entertained for men. As also Joshua, the holy captain of the people, did prostrate himself to another angel, which with a sword in his hand made him afraid at the gates of Jericho. Wherefore if those were just men, and if we are obliged to follow their example, and they were not reprehended for it; it is clear, that to worship the Law in this manner as we do, can be no idolatry.

Secondly. The Jews are very scrupulous in such things, and fear in the least to appear to give honour or reverence to images. And so it is to be seen in the Talmud, and in Rabbi Moses of Egypt in his Treatise on Idolatry: "That if by chance any Israelite should pass by a church that had images on the outside, and at that time a thorn should run into his foot, he may not stoop

to pull it out, because he that should see him, might suspect he bowed to such an image." Therefore according to this strictness, if that were any appearance of idolatry to bow to the Law, the Jews would utterly abhor it; and since they do it, it is an evident sign that it is none.

Thirdly. To kiss images is the principal worship of idolatry, as God saith, in 1 Kings xix. 18. "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him." But if that were so, it would follow that all men, who kiss the testament after they are sworn, should be idolaters. But because that is not so, since that act is but a simple worship, by the same reason it will follow, that to bow the head cannot be reputed for idolatry.

Fourthly. Experience shews, that in all nations, the ceremonies that men use mutually one towards another, is to bow the head; and also there are degrees thereof, according to the quality of the person with whom they speak: which shews, that in the opinion of all nations it is no idolatry; and therefore much less to reverence the Law with bowing of the body.

Fifthly. In Asia (and it is the same almost in all the world) the people receiving a decree, or order of the king, they take it, and kiss it, and set

it upon the head. We owe much more to God's word, and to his divine commandments.

Sixthly. Ptolomæus Philadelphus, receiving the seventy-two interpreters with the Book of the Law into his presence, rose from his seat and, prostrating himself seven times, worshipped it (as Aristæus assures us). If a Gentile did this to a Law which he thought did not oblige him, much more do we owe reverence to that law which was particularly given unto us.

Seventhly. The Israelites hold, for the articles of their faith, that there is a God who is one in most simple Unity, Eternal, Incorporeal; who gave the written Law unto his people Israel by the hand of Moses, the prince and chief of all the prophets; whose providence takes care for the world which he created; who takes notice of all men's works, and rewards or punishes them. Lastly, that one day Messias shall come to gather together the scattered Israelites, and shortly after shall be the resurrection of the dead.

These are their doctrines, which I believe contain not any idolatry; nor yet in the opinion of those that are of other judgments. For as a most learned Christian of our time hath written in a French book, which he calls the Rappel of the Jews (in which he makes the king of France to be their leader when they shall return to their

own country), "The Jews," saith he, "shall be saved: for yet we expect a second coming of the same Messias; and the Jews believe that that coming is the first, and not the second; and by that faith they shall be saved: for the difference consists only in the circumstance of the time.

### THE THIRD SECTION.

SIR, I hope I have given satisfaction to your worship touching those points. I shall yet further inform you with the same sincerity concerning the rest. Sixtus Senensis, in his Bibliotheca, lib. 2. Titulo contra Talmud, and others, as Biatensis, Ordine 1. Tract 1. Titulo Berachot, aver, out of the Talmud, cap. 4. "That every Jew thrice a day curses all Christians, and prays to God to confound and root them out, with their kings and princes. And this is especially done in the synagogue, by the Jews' priests, thrice a day." I pray let such as love the truth, see the Talmud in the quoted place, and they shall find nothing of that which is objected; only there is recited in the said fourth chapter, the daily prayer, which speaks of Minim, that is heretics, ordained in Tabne, (that is a town not far from Jerusalem, between Gath and Gazim, &c.) the Talmud hath no more. Hence Sixtus

Senensis, by distillation, draws forth the foresaid calumny, whenas what the Talmud rehearses briefly to be made only by the wise men in the said town, he saith was a constitution in the Talmud long after.

Now let us see what was done by those wise men in the said town ; and let us examine, whether that may justly offend the Christians.

1. There is, in the daily prayers, a certain chapter where it is thus written, “ la-Mumarim, &c.” that is, “ For apostates let there be no hope ; let all heretics be destroyed, and all thine enemies ; and all that hate thee let them perish. And thou shalt root out the kingdom of Pride forthwith, weaken and put it out, and in our days.” This whole chapter speaks nothing of the Christians originally, but of the Jews, who fell in those times to the Sadducees and Epicureans, and to the Gentiles, as Moses of Egypt saith, Tract. Tephila cap. 2. For by apostates and heretics are not to be understood all men that are of a diverse religion, or heathens, or Gentiles, but those renegado Jews who did abrogate the whole law of Moses, or any articles received thence ; and such are properly by us called heretics. For according to the law of Christians, he is not properly an apostate or heretic, who is originally bred a scholar, and a candid follower from his youth, of a



diverse law, and so continues: otherwise native Jews and Hagarenes, and other nations that are no Christians, nor ever were, should be properly called apostates and heretics in respect of Christians, which is absurd; as it is absurd for the Jews to call the Christians apostates or heretics. Wherefore it speaks nothing of Christians, but of the fugitive Jews, that is, such as have deserted the standard, or the sacred law.

2. Lastly, neither the kingdom, nor kings that are Christians, or Hagarenes, or followers of other sects are cursed here, but namely the kingdom of Pride. Certain it is, that in that time (wherein our wise men added to the daily prayers the fore-said chapter) there was no kingdom of Christians. What therefore that kingdom of Pride was, should any man ask, who can plainly show it? So much as we can conjecture by it, it is the kingdom of the Romans which then flourished, which did rule over all nations tyrannically and proudly, especially over the Jews.\* For after that, Vespasian,

\* If by the "Kingdom of Pride" in this passage, we are to understand a certain empire on earth, I do not see that any other can be meant but the Roman, under the tyranny of which the Jews lived at the period when that prayer was introduced. But how does this chime with what the Rabbi affirms, in the sequel, and proves with quotations from Josephus and Philo, namely, that the Jews have been offering sacrifices, and ordaining prayers for the welfare of the Roman emperor, and the empire? Cer-

with his son Titus, had dissipated all Judea. And though some Roman emperors after that became Christians, or had a good opinion of Christianity, yet the kingdom of the Romans was heathenish, and without distinction was proud and tyrannical.

tainly, according to the sentence of the Rabbins in general, "Sin is to be execrated, but not the sinner."

Methinks here there is, evidently, an ambiguity in the wording, which the Rabbi, with his profound knowledge of Hebrew, ought to have perceived. The *kingdom of pride* may, indeed, mean the same as the *proud kingdom*. It is a peculiarity of the Hebrew language, that it expresses the property of things more by abstract substantives than by adjectives; whereas in other known languages, the *Abstracta* are almost generally wont to be formed of the adjective. *Men of justice, days of happiness, voice of strength*, is as much as to say, *just men, happy days, strong voice*, as is *soul of life, living soul*. In this derivative mode of signification of abstract substantives, *government of pride* means the same as *proud government*, and consequently means some particular government; and then there is no longer a question which.

But the *nomen abstractum* has not, therefore, in the English language, entirely lost its original signification. The 'dominion of Pride,' may also mean merely pride, the vehemence of that passion generally, and particularly the sovereigns addicted to it, who govern their fellow-creatures with arrogance and superciliousness. In this particular sense, therefore, no particular kingdom on earth is execrated here, no downfall wished to any particular government; and the formula of the prayer may very well be construed into the following harmless ejaculation: "Let arrogance (or the arrogant) no longer reign over men; but let the dominion of pride be weakened and put down, and those addicted to it be humiliated forthwith, and in our days." Who does not, with all his heart, cry Amen to this?

And however the Jews repeated the same words of the prayer when the prince was very good, and they lived under a just government, that they did only of an ancient custom, without any malice to the present government. And now truly, in all their books printed again, the foresaid words are wanting, lest they should now be unjustly objected against the Jews; and so for apostates and heretics, they say, "secret accusers or betrayers of the Jews;" and for the kingdom of pride, they substitute "all Zedim," that is, proud men.

3. After this manner, to avoid scandal, did the seventy-two interpreters, who coming, in Leviticus, to "unclean beasts," in the place of *Arnebeth*, which signifies the hare, they put *Δασύπιδα*, that is, Rough-foot; leaving the name, and retaining the sense. They would not retain the Hebrew word *Arnebeth*, as they have done in some other appellatives, lest the wife of Ptolemy, whose name was *Arnebet*, should think the Jews had mocked her, if they should have placed her name among the unclean beasts. Neither would they render it *Λαγῶν Lagoon*, or *Λαγὸν Lagon*, which, in the Greek language, signifies a hare, lest Ptolemy himself, who was the son and nephew of the Lagi, should be offended to see the name of his family registered among the creatures that were unclean. Besides, Plutarch records how it was deeply resented, as a very high

affront and contempt, when one asked Ptolemy, who was Lagus's father ; as if it scoffingly reflected upon his obscure extraction and descent.

4. The very like calumny fell out concerning the very same chapter of our prayer. When Mulet Zidan reigned in Morocco, a certain fugitive Jew, to show himself constant in the Mahometan religion, and an enemy to his own nation, accused the Jews before this king, saying, "that they prayed to God for his destruction, when they mention in their prayers all Zedim ; as though they would have all the family of Zidan destroyed. They excused themselves with the truth, and affirmed, in praying against Zedim, that they prayed only against proud men (as that word in the Hebrew language properly signifies) and not against his majesty. The king admitted of their excuse, but said unto them, that because of the equivocation of the word, they should change it for another.

4. For certain, the Jews give no occasion that any prince or magistrate should be offended with them ; but contrariwise, as it seems to me, they are bound to love them, to defend, and protect them ; for by their Law and Talmud, and the inviolable custom of the dispersed Jews everywhere, upon every sabbath-day, and in all yearly solemnities, they have prayers for kings and princes, under whose government the Jews live, be they

Christians, or of other religions. I say, by their Law, as Jeremiah (chap. xxix,) commandeth, viz. "Seek ye the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray for them unto the Lord, &c." By the Talmud, Ord. 4, Tract. 4. Abodazara, cap. 1. there is a prayer for the peace of the kingdom, from custom never intermitted of the Jews. Wheresoever they are on the sabbath-day, and their annual solemnities, the minister of the synagogue, before he blesses the people of the Jews, doth with a loud voice bless the prince of the country under whom they live, that all the Jews may hear it; and they say, Amen. You have seen the form of the prayer in the book entitled, "The Humble Addresses."

6. In like manner, the ancients observe, that whereas God commands in Num. xxix. 13, that seventy bullocks should be sacrificed upon the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles, that this was in respect of the seventy nations (who shall one day come up to Jerusalem, year after year, to keep this Feast of Tabernacles, Zech. xiv. 16,) for whose conservation they also sacrificed. For they say, "that all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham and his seed, not only spiritually, and in the knowledge of the One First Cause, but also that at this time they shall enjoy temporal and earthly blessings by virtue of that promise.

And so in the time of the second temple, they offered up sacrifices for their confederate nations, as may appear by these ensuing instances.

In Megilat Tahanit, cap. 9, it is reported, that when Alexander the Great, at the instigation of the Samaritans that inhabited Mount Gerizim, went with a resolution to destroy the temple, Simeon the Just met him in the way, and, amongst divers reasons that he urged to divert him from his purpose, told him, "This is the place we pray unto God for the welfare of yourself, and of your kingdom, that it may not be destroyed; and shall these men persuade you to destroy this place?"

The like we find in the first book of the Maccabees, cap. vii. 33, and in Josephus's Antiq. lib. 12. cap. 17, when Demetrius had sent Nicanor, the general of his army, against Jerusalem, the priests, with the elders of the people, went forth to salute him, and to shew him the sacrifice which they offered up to God for the welfare of the king.

In the same history, lib. 2, 3; and in Josephus Gorionides, lib. 3. cap. 16, we may read, that when Heliodorus, general to Seleucus, came to Jerusalem with the same intent, Onias, the high-priest, besought him not to destroy that place, where they prayed to God for the prosperity of the king and his issue, and for the conservation of his kingdom.

In the first chapter of Baruch, the disciple of

Jeremiah, we find that the Jews, who were first carried captive into Babylon with Jechonias, made a collection of money, according to every one's power, and sent it to Jerusalem, saying, "Behold we have sent you money, wherewith ye shall buy offerings, and pray for the life of Nebuchadnezzar, and for the life of Baltasar his son; that their days may be upon earth as the days of heaven, and that God would give us strength, and lighten our eyes, that we may live under their shadow, that we may long do them service, and find favour in their sight.

The Jews in Asia did the same, as is reported by Josephus Gorionides, lib. 3. cap. 4, they sent letters, with a present to Hircanus the high priest, desiring that prayers might be made for the life of Augustus Cæsar, and his companion Marcus Antonius.

Philo Judæus, in the book of his embassy to Caius, making mention of a letter which Caius sent, requesting his statue to be set up in the sacred temple, and Agrippa's answer thereupon unto the said emperor, reports, that there were these words in it, viz. "The Jews sacrifice for the prosperity of your empire, and that not only upon their solemn feasts, but also every day."

The like is recorded by Josephus (lib. 2. cap. 9. de Bello Judaico):—The Jews said to Patronius, general to the Emperor Caius. "We daily offer up

burnt offerings unto God, for the peace of the emperor and the whole people of Rome." And in his second book against Apion, he says, "We Hebrews have always been accustomed to honour emperors with particular sacrifices."

Neither was this service entertained unthankfully, as appears by the decree of Cyrus, Ezra vi. 3. where also Darius commands, that of the king's goods, even of the tribute, expences should be forthwith given unto the elders of the Jews, &c. and that which they had need of, both young bullocks and rams, and lambs for the burnt-offerings of the Lord of Heaven, and wheat, salt, wine, and oil, &c. that they might offer sacrifices of a sweet savour unto the God of Heaven, and pray for the life of the king and of his sons.

The same also was commanded afterwards by Artaxerxes, who also conferred liberally many large gifts, as well towards the building of the temple, as the maintaining of the sacrifices. As for Alexander the Great, he lighted down out of his chariot, and bowed himself at the feet of the high priest, desiring him to offer up sacrifice to God on his behalf. And who can be ignorant of Ptolemy Philadelphus, how richly he endowed the temple, as is recorded by Aristæus? Nor did Antiochus, king of the Greeks, unlike this, when, by a public edict, he forbid that any stranger should enter the



temple, to profane that place, which the Hebrews had consecrated to religion and divine worship (Josephus lib. 12. cap. 3). Demetrius did the like (Josephus lib. 13. cap. 5. 6). To which may be added, that when they of Jerusalem contended with them of Samaria, about the honour and dignity of the temple before Alexander the Great, the Jerusalem priest, in his plea, urged, "That this temple was ever had in great reverence by all the kings of Asia, and by them enriched with sundry splendid and magnificent gifts." In the second book of Josephus against Apion, we read, that Ptolomy Euergetes, when he had conquered Syria, offered up eucharistical sacrifices, not to idols and false gods, but to the true God at Jerusalem, according to the manner of the Jews. Pompey the Great, as is mentioned by Josephus de Bello Judaico, lib. 1. cap. 5, durst not spoil, no nor so much as touch the treasures of the temple; not because (as Tully in his oration for Plancus supposes, to whom Augustin, in his book de Civitate Dei, assents) he feared lest he might be thought too avaricious (for this seems in comparison very ridiculous and childish, for military law would soon have acquitted him for this), but because of the reverence to the place with which his mind was so affected. Philo Judæus, p. 102-6, relates a letter of Agrippa's, where he writes, that Augustus Cæsar had

the temple in so great reverence, that he commanded a sacrifice of one bullock and two lambs to be offered up every day out of his own revenues. And his wife, Julia Augusta, adorned it with golden cups and basons, and many other costly gifts. Neither did Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, fall short of her liberality. Tiberius, throughout the twenty-two years of his empire, commanded sacrifices to be offered up unto God out of his own tribute. The like did Nero, till the unadvised rashness of Eleazar, in refusing his sacrifice, alienated the mind of the emperor, that he became the cause of a bloody persecution.

And by all this, we may the better interpret that eleventh verse of the first chapter of Malachi (who flourished in the second temple) the words are, "From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts." For besides that the heathens termed the temple the house of the great God, Ezra v. 8, they and their monarchs and emperors, both of Persia, Greece, and Rome, desired, as we have heard, to have sacrifices and incense offered for them in God's name.

9. And let the reader be pleased further to

observe, that the Jews were accustomed not only to offer up sacrifices and prayers to God for the emperors, their friends, confederates and allies, but also generally for the whole world. It is the custom (saith Agrippa to Caius according to Philo. p. 1035) for the high priest, at the day of atonement, to make a prayer unto God for all mankind, beseeching him to add unto them another year, with blessing and peace. The same Philo Judæus, in his second book of monarchy, saith, "The priests of other nations pray unto God only for the welfare of their own particular nations, but our high priest prays for the happiness and prosperity of the whole world." And in his book of sacrifices, p. 836, he saith, "Some sacrifices are offered up for our nation, and some for all mankind. For the daily sacrifices twice a day, viz. at morning and evening, are for the obtaining of those good things, which God, the chief good, grants unto them at those two times of the day."

And in like manner, Josephus, in his second book against Apion, saith, "We sacrifice and pray unto the Lord, in the first place, for the whole world, for their prosperity and peace, and afterwards more particularly for ourselves; forasmuch as we conceive that prayer, which is first extended universally, and is afterwards put up more particularly, is very much acceptable unto God."

Which words are also related by Eusebius Cæsariensis in his *Præparatio Evangelica*, lib. 8. cap. 2.

10. 'Tis true that no outward material glories are perpetual; and so the temple had its period; and with the paschal Lamb all other sacrifices ceased: but in their stead, we have at this day prayer, and as Hosea speaks, chap. xiv. 2. "For bullocks, we render the calves of our lips." And three times every day this is our humble supplication and request to God: "Fill the whole world, O Lord, with thy blessings; for all creatures are the works of thy hands:" as it is written, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." Psal. cxlv. 9.

11. Yea, further, we pray for the conversion of the nations,\* and so we say in these most ex-

\* *Conversion* certainly was not the word which the Rabbi wanted to use, neither does it suit. In all the extracts from the new year's day's, and day of atonement's service, there is not the slightest allusion to a conversion to Judaism, or to a universal consent to embrace its laws and tenets; whereas, nothing short of that can be called proper conversion; and we may be sure that such a kind of conversion never entered King Solomon's mind when he composed the memorable passage of his dedication, quoted on this occasion. Besides, such a prayer would have been but an equivocal proof of charity and forbearance. At every *Auto da Fe* they fervently pray for the conversion of heretics, who, if the prayers have not the desired effect, are forthwith committed to the flames. According to the true spirit

cellent prayers, upon Rosh hashana and the day of atonement,—“Our God, and the God of our

of Judaism, we hope for times when the knowledge of God, as the sole and universal creator, preserver, and ruler of heaven and earth, will extend to all nations; when all who have the divine breath in their nostrils will acknowledge him, prostrate themselves before him, and worship him. Conformably to the design of Providence, a multiplicity of modes of external worship, always must, and always will continue to exist. Proper Judaism, or the system of Jewish rites, laws and testimonies, are to be for the Jews, and Israelites only, *an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob*. The rest of the nations will call on God after their own manner; but they will recognize the majesty and infinite goodness of the true *One* God, and cast away their idols. It is the speedy coming of those golden times that we pray for, in our daily orisons, and particularly on new year's day, and on the day of atonement. “We, therefore, hope” say we at the conclusion of our daily prayers,—“we, therefore, hope in thee, O Lord, our God! speedily to behold thy glorious power remove the abominations out of the earth, and cause all the idols to be utterly destroyed, and establish the universe under the sole dominion of the Almighty; so that all flesh may invoke thy name; all the wicked of the earth turn unto thee; and all the inhabitants of the world together know and acknowledge that unto thee every knee must bow, and every tongue swear; before thee, O Lord, our God! they shall kneel and fall prostrate; they shall ascribe honour to thy glorious name: and all of them shall willingly submit to the power of thy dominion. Deign thou, therefore, to reign over them speedily for ever and ever; for the kingdom is thine, and thou shalt eternally reign in glory; as it is written in thy law: “On that day the Lord alone shall be acknowledged, and his name shall also be one.”

Here is not the question of an amalgamation of sundry doctrines and laws, and still less of a so called religious junction.

fathers, reign thou over the whole world in thy glory, and be thou exalted over all the earth in thine excellency ; cause thy influence to descend upon all the inhabitants of the world, in the glorious majesty of thy strength ; and let every creature know that thou hast created him ; and let every thing that is formed understand that thou hast formed it ; and let all that have breath in their nostrils say, The Lord God of Israel reigneth, and his kingdom is over all dominions." And again, " Let all the inhabitants of the earth know and see, that unto thee every knee shall bow, and every tongue swear ; before thee, O Lord our God, let them bow and prostrate themselves : let them

The latter leads straightway to odious intolerance. All persecutions have, from the beginning, been exercised in the name, and on behalf of that religious junction ; and it is to be shunned, and prevented with might and main, as the most dangerous enemy of mankind, and of their happiness ; for if it can ever be attained, it would indubitably raise up again barbarism of old, together with the terrible spirit of persecution. Chevalier Michaelis, in his miscellaneous works, has published some highly interesting letters on that subject, for which every lover of truth, and freedom of thinking, is not a little indebted to him.—I ask pardon for the length of this note ; but it was necessary, in order to anticipate a misconstruction, of which the Rabbi's words may prove the means. If I am not mistaken, it is even in contemplation in some places, to bring this confusion of ideas into vogue, and to seek to lead, or rather to mislead, the tolerant mind of the great on a religious junction.

give honour to the honour of thy name, and let them all take upon them the yoke of thy kingdom, &c.” And again, “Put thy fear, O Lord our God, upon all thy works, and thy dread upon all that thou hast created; let all thy works fear thee, and let all creatures bow down before thee, and let them all make themselves one handful, (that is, with joint consent) to do thy will with a perfect heart, &c.” A most worthy imitation of the wise King Solomon, who, after he had finished the building of the temple, in that long prayer, 1st Kings viii. was not unmindful of the Gentiles; but verse 41, he saith, “Moreover, concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name’s sake, for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm; when he shall come and pray towards this house, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the earth may know thy name to fear thee, as do the people of Israel, and that they may know that thy name is called upon in this House which I have builded.” Where it may be observed, that when the Israelites come to pray, he saith, ver. 29. “And give every man according to his ways;” but upon the prayer of a stranger he saith, “And do according to all that the

stranger calleth to thee for." And this distinction is made to this end, that by the evident and apparent return and answer of their prayers, all gentiles might effectually be brought into the truth, and knowledge, and fear of God, as well as the Israelites.

12. Moreover, since the holy prophets made prayers and supplications for all men, as well for the nations as the Israelites, how should not we do the same for the nations among whom we inhabit, as engaged by a more special obligation, for that we live under their favour and protection? In Deut. xxlii. 7. God commands, "Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, notwithstanding the heavy burdens they afflicted us with, only because thou wast a stranger in his land;" because that, at the first they entertained and received us into their country.

As on the other side, Ezek. xxlii. 11. he saith, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." We ought therefore to imitate his actions, and not to hate any man, upon the mere account of religion, but to pray to the Lord for his conversion; and this also without giving offence, or any kind of molestation. To detest or abhor those, to whom we owe that prosperity which we enjoy, or who endeavour their



own salvation, is a thing very unworthy and ill-becoming ; but to abhor their vices and sins, is not so. It was a very excellent observation of a most wise and virtuous lady, Beroria, who (as it is recorded in the Talmud. Berachot, cap. 1.) when her husband Rabbi Meir was about to pray to God to destroy some of his perverse and froward neighbours, that had no less grievously than maliciously vexed and molested him, gave him this seasonable admonition, that such a thing ought not to be done in Israel ; but that he should rather make his prayer that they might return, and break off their sins by repentance : alleging that text, Psal. civ. 35. “ Let sin be consumed out of the earth (it is not said ‘sinners’, but ‘sins’); and then the wicked shall be no more.”

13. We have now in this section shewn, that it is a mere calumny to imagine, that we Jews should pray to God, so as to give an offence to the Christians, or cause scandal by any thing in our prayers, unless it be that we are not Christians. We have declared, on the contrary,—how we daily pray for them ; as also that during the time of the temple, we offered up sacrifices for nations confederate with us, and how all emperors desired this ; yea, and we offered sacrifices, not only for particular princes, but for all mankind in general—how, since sacrifices ceased with the temple, we

at this day do the same in our prayers—and how we beseech God for their salvation, without giving any scandal or offence in respect of religion,—and how we think ourselves obliged to perform all this by the Sacred Scripture; by all which laid together, I hope I have sufficiently evidenced the truth of that I have asserted.

#### THE FOURTH SECTION.

By consequence, the accusation of Buxtorfius, in his *Bibliotheca Rabbinorum*, can have no appearance of truth, concerning that which he puts upon us, viz. ‘That we are blasphemers.’ I will set down the prayer itself:—

“We are bound to praise the Lord of all things; to magnify him who made the world, for that he hath not made us as the nations of the earth, nor hath he placed us as the families of the earth, nor hath he made our condition like unto theirs, nor our lot according to all their multitude. For they humble themselves to things of no worth and vanity, and make their prayers to gods that cannot save them; but we worship before the King of Kings, that is holy and blessed, that stretched forth the heavens, and framed the earth: the seat of his glory is in heaven above, and his divine strength in the highest of the heavens. He is our

God, and there is no other ; he is truly our king, and besides him there is no other, as it is written in the Law. And know this day, and return into thine own heart, because the Lord is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath, there is no other."

Truly, in my opinion, it is a very short and most excellent prayer, and worthy of commendation. The sultan Selim, that famous conqueror and emperor of the Mahometans, made so much account of it, that he commanded his doctor, Moses Amon, (who translated the Pentateuch into the Arabian and Persian languages) that he should translate our prayers. And when he had delivered them to him in the Turkish tongue, he said to him, "What need is there of so long prayers?" Truly this one might suffice, he did so highly esteem and value it. This is like another prayer which was made at that time, viz.

"Blessed be our God, who created us for his honour, and separated us from those that are in error, and gave unto us a law of truth, and planted amongst us eternal life. Let him open our hearts in his law, and put his love in our hearts, and his fear, to do his will, and to serve him with a perfect heart ; that we may not labour in vain, nor beget children of perdition. Let it be thy will, O Lord our God, and God of our fathers, that we may keep

thy statutes and laws in this world, and may deserve, and live, and inherit well, and that we may attain the blessing of the world to come, that so we may sing to thy honour without ceasing. O Lord my God, I will praise thee for ever."

But neither the one nor the other is a blasphemy, or malediction against any other gods, for these reasons following :

1. It is not the manner of the Jews by their law to curse other gods by name, though they be of the Gentiles. So in Exod. xxii, 27. "Thou shalt not revile the gods." Hebrew אֱלֹהִים, that is, Gods, or God, as Philo Judæus, in Libro de Monarchia, doth interpret; and not judges, as Onkelos and Jonathan translate in their Chaldee paraphrase. Where Philo adds this reason, which is, lest they hearing their own gods blasphemed, should in a revengeful way of retaliation blaspheme the true God of Israel. And we have examples enough, how the idolatrous heathen used to revile and defame each other's gods, both in Cicero and Juvenal.

And in that sense, Flavius Josephus, in his book written against Apion, hath these words: "As it is our practice to observe our own, and not to accuse or revile others; so neither may we deride or blaspheme those which others account to be Gods. Our lawgiver plainly forbad us that, by reason of

that compellation, *Gods.*" According to this, by our own religion we dare not do that which Buxtorfius chargeth us with. And upon this account the Talmudists tell us, that we ought to honour and reverence not only the kings of Israel, but all kings, princes, and governors in general; forasmuch as the holy scripture gives them the style of gods, in respect of the dignity of their office.

2. The time wherein these, as also the other prayers were composed and ordered, was in the days of Ezra, who, with 120 men, amongst whom were three prophets, Haggai, Zechary, Malachi, composed them, as we have it in the Talmud. Wherefore he cannot say, that there is any thing intended against the honour and reverence of Christ, who was not born till many years after.

Moreover, the Jews, since that calumny was first raised, (though that was spoken of the Gentiles and their vain Gods, humbling themselves to things of no worth and vanity) because they desire to decline, and avoid the least occasion of scandal and offence, have left off to print that line, and do not in some books print any part thereof. As John Hoornbeek also witnesses, in his forementioned Prolegomena; and William Dorstius in his observations upon Rabbi David Gawz, p. 269, and Buxtorf in his Book of Abbreviatures. And perhaps it will be worthy our observation, that all

these three witnesses say, that it was first made known to them by one Antonius Margarita, who was a Jew converted to the Christian faith, that this part of the prayer was intended (*contra idola Papatus*) against the Popish idols, which they therefore, as by a necessary consequence, interpret as against Christ ; but how justly, let the unprejudiced and unbiassed reader judge.

3. If this be so, how can it be thought, that in their synagogues they name him with scornful spitting? (far be it from us!) The nation of the Jews is wise and ingenious: so said the Lord, Deut. iv. 6. "The nations shall say, Surely this is a wise and an understanding people." Therefore how can it be supposed, that they should be so brutish in a strange land, when their religion depends not upon it? Certainly, it is much contrary to the precept we speak of, to show any resemblance of scorn. There was never any such thing done (as it is well known) in Italy and Holland, where ordinarily the synagogues are full of Christians, who with great attention stand considering and weighing all their actions and motions. And truly they should have found great occasion to find fault withal, if that were so. But never was any man heard thus to calumniate us, wherever we dwell and inhabit; which is a reason sufficiently valid to clear us. Wherefore I suppose,

that I have sufficiently informed you concerning our prayers, in which we purpose nothing but to praise God and ask spiritual and temporal blessings; and by our service and worship, implore the divine benevolence, protection, and defence.

#### THE FIFTH SECTION.

**BUT** forasmuch as it is reported, that we draw and seduce others to our religion, &c.

1. Never unto this day in any part hath this been suspected, where the Jews are dispersed, nor can it find place here. Truly I have held friendship with many great men, and the wisest and most eminent of all Europe; and also they came to see me from many places at my house, and I had many friendly discourses with them; yet did not this give occasion to make us suspected of any such things. Yea, Gaspar Barleus, (the Virgil of our time,) and many others, hath written many verses in my commendation, which I mention, not for vain-glory (far be it!) but for vindication of my innocent repute.

2. By our ritual books we are clear of this seducing: for if any man offer to become a Jew, of what nation soever he be, before we receive him and admit him as a member of our synagogue, we are bound to consider, whether he be moved by

necessity to do it, or if it be not for that he is in love with some of our nation, or for any other worldly respect. And when we find no reason to suspect him, we have yet another obligation upon us, which is, to let him know the penalties he subjects himself unto if he breaketh the Sabbath, or eateth blood, or fat, which is forbidden, Levit. iii. 17, or disannulleth any precept of the Law, as may be seen in the Targum upon Ruth. And if he shew himself constant and zealous, then is he admitted and protected. Wherefore, we do not seduce any one, but contrarily, avoid disputing with men concerning religion, not for want of charity, but that we may, as far as it is possible, avoid scandal and hate; and, for this cause, we refuse to circumcise them that come to us, because we will give no offence. Yea, I have known some, that for this reason have circumcised themselves. And, if Ferdinand and Isabella, king and queen of Castile, did make an order to expel the Jews, because they seduced many Christians, and some of the nobility to become Jews; this was but a pretence and colour for their tyranny, and only, as it is well known, having no other thing to object against us. Truly I do much commend that opinion, not only of Osorius de Rebus Immanuelis, but of our Flavius Josephus, the most famous of



all historians ; which he relates in his history of his own life :—

“ At that time (saith he), there came unto me two noblemen of the Trachonites, subjects of the king, bringing with them horsemen, with arms and money. These, when the Jews would compel to be circumcised, if they would live amongst them, I would not suffer them to trouble them ; maintaining that every man ought to serve God of his own free will, and not be forced thereto by others. For should we do this thing (saith he), it might make them repent that they ever fled unto us. And so, persuading the multitude, I did abundantly afford unto these men their food, according to their diet.”

Truly, this was an action worthy of a noble and wise man, and worthy of imitation, for defending common liberty ; leaving the judgment and determination to God alone. The Spanish Inquisitions, with all their torments and cruelties, cannot make any Jew that falls into their power become a Christian. For unreasonable beasts are taught by blows ; but men are taught by reason. Nor are men persuaded to other opinions by torments, but rather on the contrary, they become more firm and constant in their tenets.

## THE SIXTH SECTION.

HAVING thus discussed the main exceptions, I will now proceed to smaller matters, though less pertaining to my faculty, that is, to business of merchandize. Some say, that if the Jews come to dwell here, they will draw unto themselves the whole negotiation, to the great damage of the natural inhabitants. I answer, that it hath been my opinion always (with submission to better judgment), that it can be no prejudice at all to the English nation; because, principally in transporting their goods, they would gain much, by reason of the public payments of customs, excise, &c.

Moreover, they would always bring profit to the people of the land, as well in buying of commodities, which they would transport to other places, as in those they would trade in here. And if by accident any particular person should lose by it, by bringing down the price of such a commodity, being dispersed into many hands; yet, by that means the commonwealth would gain, in buying cheaper, and procuring it at a lesser rate.

Yea, great emolument would grow to the natural inhabitants, as well in the sale of all provision, as in all things else that concern the ornaments of the

body. Yea, and the native mechanics also would gain by it, there being rarely found among us any man that uses such an art.

2. Add to this, that as our nation hath sailed into almost all parts of the world, so they are always herein profitable to a nation, in a readiness to give their opinions in favour of the people amongst whom they live; besides that all strangers do bring in new merchandizes, together with the knowledge of those foreign countries wherein they were born.

And this is so far from damnifying the natives, that it conduces much to their advantage; because they bring from their countries new commodities, with new knowledge. For the great work-master and creator of all things, to the end to make commerce in the earth, gave not to every place all things, but hath parted his benefits amongst them; by which way, he hath made them all wanting the help of others. This may be seen in England, which being one of the most plentiful countries that are in the world, yet wants divers things for shipping, as also wine, oil, figs, almonds, raisins, and all the drugs of India; things so necessary for the life of man. And besides, they want many other commodities, which are abundant in other countries with more knowledge of them; though it be true, that in my opinion there is not in the world a more

understanding people for most navigations, and more capable of all negotiation than the English nation are.

3. Farther, there may be the companies made of the natives and strangers (where they are more acquainted) or else factors. All which, if I be not deceived, will amount to the profit of the natives. For which many reasons may be brought, though I cannot comprehend them, having always lived a sedentary life, applying myself to my studies, which are far remote from things of that nature.

4. Nor can it be justly objected against our nation, that they are deceivers ; because the generality, cannot in any additional way, be condemned for some particulars. I cannot excuse them all, nor do I think but there may be some deceivers amongst them, as well as amongst all other nations and people, because poverty bringeth baseness along with it.

5. But, if we look to that which we ought, by our religion, the moral precept of the decalogue, "Thou shalt not steal," it belongs in common to all Jews towards all Gentiles : As may be seen in Rabbi Moses of Egypt, Tract. Geneba, cap. 1. and Gazella, cap. 1. 'It is a sin, (saith he,) to rob any man, though he be a Gentile.' Nor, can that be alleged out of the Sacred History, concerning the jewels and household-stuff, of which the Israelites

spoiled the Egyptians, as I have heard it sometimes alleged by some, to some men ; because that was a particular dispensation, and a divine precept for that time. So it is recorded in the Talmud, in the tract of the Sanhedrim, cap. 11. that in the time of Alexander the Great, those of Alexandria accused the Jews for being thieves, and they demanded restitution of their goods. But Guebia Ben Pesria answered them, "Our fathers went down into Egypt but seventy souls, there they grew a numerous nation, above six hundred thousand, and served them in base offices for the space of two hundred and ten years ; according to this, pay us for our labour, and make the accounts even, and you shall see you are yet much in our debt." The reason satisfied Alexander, and he acquitted them.

6. By consequence, the Jews are bound not to defraud, nor abuse in their accounts, negociation, or reckonings, any man whatsoever, as it may be seen expressly in Rabbi Moses of Egypt, and Rabbi Moses de Kosi in Samag.

7. Yea, they farther say, that by restitutions there is a result to the praise of God, and the Sacred Law. Whence that holy and wise man, Rabbi Simeon Ben Satah, having bought an ass of a Gentile, the head-stall whereof was a jewel of great value, which the owner knew not of,

Afterwards he found it, and, freely and for nothing, he restored it to the seller who knew not of it, saying, "I bought the ass, but not the jewel." Whence there did accrue honour to God and his Law, and to the nation of the Jews, as Medras Raba reports in Parasot Hekel.

8. After the same manner they command, that the oath which they shall make to any other nation, must be with truth and justice, and must be kept in every particular. And for proof thereof, they quote the history of Zedekias, whom God punished and deprived of his kingdom, because he kept not his word and oath, made to Nebuchadnezzar in the name of God, though he were a Gentile, as it is said, 2 Chron. xxxvi, 13. "And he also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who made him swear by God."

9. These are the laws and obligations which the Jews hold. So that the law that forbids the Jews to kill any Gentiles, forbids them also to steal from them: yet every one must look to it, for the world is full of fraud in all nations. I remember a pretty story of what passed in Morocco, in the court of the king of Mauritania. There was a Jew that had a sort of false stones, &c. He, making a truck with a Portugal Christian for some verdigrease that he had, which was much sophisticated (as they are wont to do there), being all

falsified with earth, one of the Portugal's friends laughed at him, saying, "The Jew fitted thee well." He answered, "If the Jew hath stoned me, I have buried him." And so they ordinarily mock one another.

This I can affirm, that many of the Jews, because they would not break with other men's goods, were very poor at Amsterdam, and lived very poorly; and those that did break with other men's goods, by necessity, became so much the more miserable, that they were forced to live on alms.

And whereas, in the time of King Edward I. the Jews were accused of clipping the King's coin, it appears that this accusation drew its original mainly from the suspicion and hatred the Christians bare against the Jews, as appears in the story, as it is set forth by Mr. Prynne, in his second part of "A Short Demurrer to the Jews," &c. p. 82. where quoting Claus. 7. E. 1. n. 7. *De fine recipiendo a Judæis*, brings in the King writing to his Judges in Latin, in these words: "Rex dilectis et fidelibus suis Stephano de Pentecester, Waltero de Helyn, et Th. de Cobham, Justiciariis ad placita transgressionis monetæ audienda, salutem. Quia omnes Judæi nuper rectati, et per certam suspicionem indictati de retonsura monetæ nostræ, et inde convicti cum ultimo supplicio puniuntur; et quidam eorum eadem occasione, omnia bona et catalla sua



satisfecerunt, et in prisiona nostra liberabantur, in eadem ad voluntatem nostram detinendi. Et cum accepimus, quod plures Christiani ob odium Judæorum, propter discrepantiam fidei Christianæ et ritus Judæorum, et diversa gratia minus per ipsos Judæos Christianis hactenus illata, postquam Judæos nondum rectatos et indictatos de transgressionem monetæ, per leves et voluntarias accusationes accusare, et indictare de die in diem nituntur et proponunt, imponendas eis ad terrorem ipsorum, quod de ejusmodi transgressionem culpabiles existunt super ipsos Judæos faciendæ, et sic per minas hujusmodi accusationis, ipsos Judæos metu incutiant, et pecuniam extorqueant ab eisdem: ita quod ipsi Judæi super hoc ad legem suam sæpe ponuntur in vitæ suæ periculum manifestum. Volumus quod omnes Judæi qui ante primum diem Maii proximi præterit indictati, vel per certam suspicionem rectati non fuerunt de transgressionem monetæ predictæ, et qui facere voluerint finem juxta discretionem vestram, ad opus nostrum facere pro sic, quod non occasiorentur, etc. hujusmodi transgressionibus factis ante primum diem Maii propter novas accusationes Christianorum post eundem diem inde factas non molestentur, sed pacem inde habeant in futurum. Proviso, quod Judæi indictati, vel per certam suspicionem, rectati de hujusmodi transgressionem ante prædictum



diem Maii, iudicium subeant coram vobis, juxta formam prius inde ordinatam et provisam. Et ideo vobis mandamus, quod fines hujusmodi capiat, et præmissa fieri et observari faciatis in forma prædicta.” *Teste Rege apud Cantuar. 8 die Maii.*

#### THE SEVENTH SECTION.

AND now, by this time, I presume (most noble Sir), I may have given abundant satisfaction (so far as the nature of an epistle will permit,) to all your objections, without giving just ground of offence or scandal to any. And, forasmuch as you are further desirous to know somewhat concerning the state of this my expedition and negociation at present, I shall now only say, and that briefly, that the communication and correspondence I have held, for some years since, with some eminent persons of England was the first original of my undertaking this design. For I always found by them, a great probability of obtaining what I now request; whilst they affirmed, that at this time the minds of men stood very well affected towards us, and that our entrance into this island would be very acceptable and well-pleasing unto them. And, from this beginning, sprang up in me a semblable affection, and desire of obtaining this

purpose: for, for seven years on this behalf, I have endeavoured and solicited, by letters and other means, without any interval. For I conceived that our universal dispersion was a necessary circumstance to be fulfilled, before all that shall be accomplished, which the Lord hath promised to the people of the Jews, concerning their restoration, and their returning again into their own land; according to those words, Dan. xii. 7. "When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." As also that this our scattering by little and little, should be amongst all people, "from the one end of the earth even unto the other," as it is written Deut. xxviii. 64. I conceived that, by "the end of the earth," might be understood this island. And I knew not, but that the Lord, who often works by natural means, might have designed and made choice of me, for the bringing about this work. With these proposals, therefore, I applied myself, in all zealous affection, to the English nation, congratulating their glorious liberty, which at this day they enjoy, together with their prosperous peace. And I addressed my book, named "The Hope of Israel," to the First Parliament, and the Council of State; and withal declared my intentions. In order to which, they sent me a very favourable passport. Afterwards, I directed myself to the

Second, and they also sent me another. But at that juncture of time, my coming was not presently performed, for that my kindred and friends, considering the chequered and interwoven vicissitudes and turns of things here below, embracing me, with pressing importunity earnestly requested me not to part from them; and would not give over, till their love constrained me to promise that I would yet a while stay with them. But, notwithstanding all this, I could not be at quiet in my mind (I know not, but that it might be through some particular Divine Providence), till I had a-new made my humble addresses to his Highness, the Lord Protector, whom God preserve. And finding that my coming over would not be altogether unwelcome to him, with those great hopes which I conceived, I joyfully took my leave of my house, my friends, my kindred, all my advantages there, and the country wherein I have lived all my lifetime, under the benign protection and favour of the Lords, the States General, and magistrates of Amsterdam: In fine, I say, I parted with them all, and took my voyage for England; where, after my arrival, being very courteously received, and treated with much respect, I presented to his most Serene Highness a petition, and some desires, which for the most part were written to me by my brethren the Jews, from several parts of Europe, as your

worship may better understand by former relations. Whereupon it pleased his Highness to convene an assembly at Whitehall, of divines, lawyers, and merchants, of different persuasions and opinions ; whereby men's judgments and sentences were different ; insomuch, that as yet we have had no final determination from his most Serene Highness. Wherefore, those few Jews that were here, despairing of our expected success, departed hence. And others who desired to come hither, have quitted their hopes, and betaken themselves, some to Italy, some to Geneva, where that Commonwealth hath at this time most freely granted them many and great privileges.

Now, O most High God, to thee I make my prayer ; even to thee, the God of our fathers, Thou, who hast been pleased to style thyself, "The Keeper of Israel ;" Thou who hast graciously promised, by thy holy prophet Jeremiah, chap. 31. "That thou wilt not cast off all the seed of Israel, for all the evil that they have done." Thou, who by so many stupendous miracles didst bring thy people out of Egypt, the land of bondage, and didst lead them into the Holy Land : graciously cause thy holy influence to descend down into the mind of the prince (who, for no private interest or respect at all, but only out of commiseration to our

affliction, hath inclined himself to protect and shelter us; for which extraordinary humanity, neither I myself, nor my nation, can ever expect to be able to render him answerable and sufficient thanks,) and also into the minds of his most illustrious and prudent council, that they may determine that which, according to thine infinite wisdom, may be best and most expedient for us. For men, O Lord, see that which is present; but thou, in thy Omniscience, seest that which is afar off.

And to the highly honoured nation of England I make my most humble request, that they would read over my arguments impartially, without prejudice and devoid of all passion, effectually recommending me to their grace and favour, and earnestly beseeching God that he would be pleased to hasten the time promised by Zephaniah, wherein we shall all serve him with one consent, after the same manner, and shall be all of the same judgment; that as his name is one, so his fear may be also one; and that we may all see the goodness of the Lord (blessed for ever!), and the consolations of Zion. Amen, and Amen.

*From my Study in London,  
April 10th (in the year from the Creation,) 5416,  
(and in the year, according to the vulgar account,) 1656.*

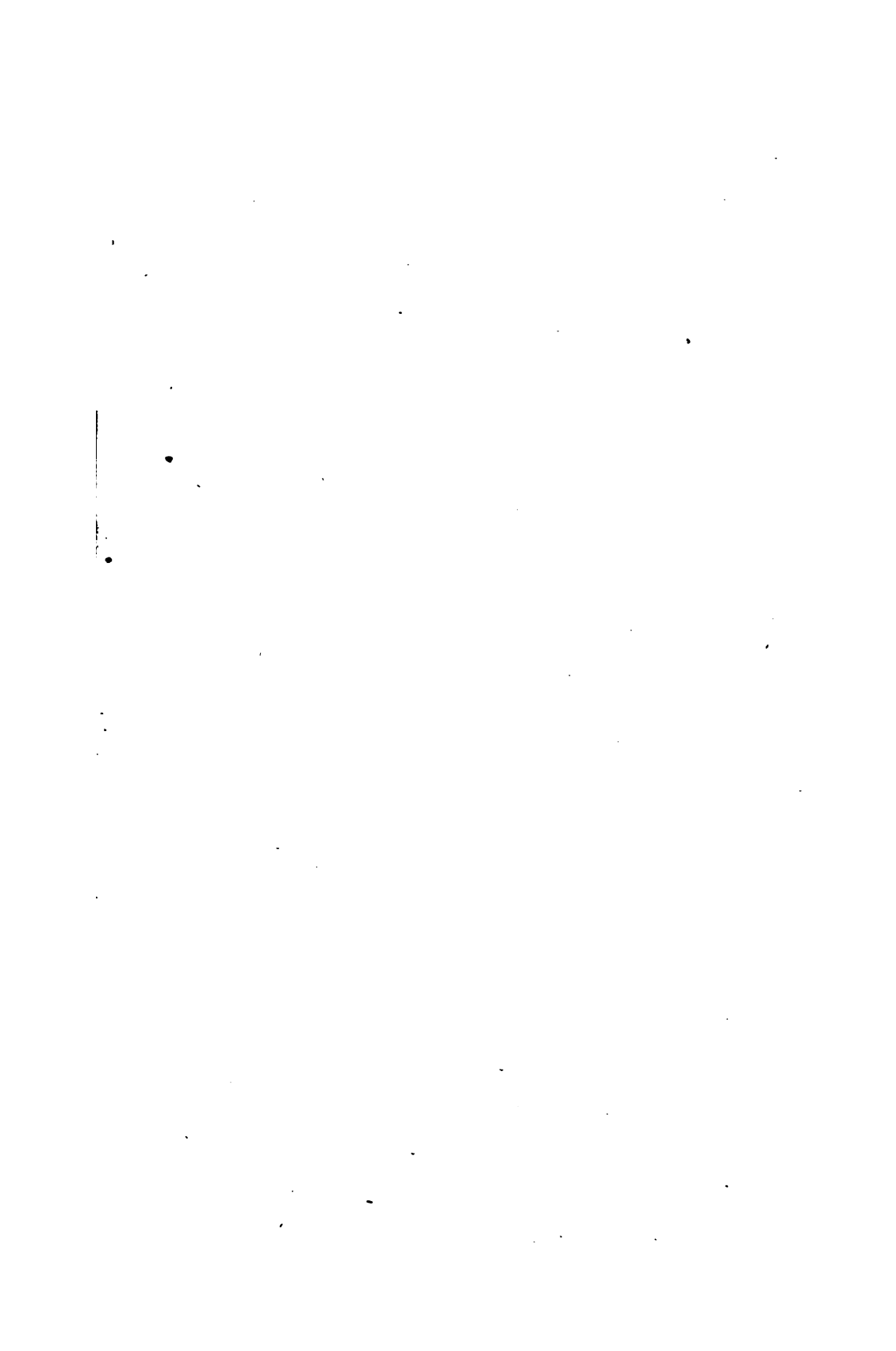
As to give satisfaction to your worship, being desirous to know what books have been written and printed by me, or else are almost ready for the press ; may you please to take the names of them in this catalogue.\*

\* See Appendix.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

PREFACE TO THE GERMAN  
TRANSLATION  
OF  
“VINDICIÆ JUDÆORUM:”  
BY  
MOSES MENDELSSOHN.





MENDELSSOHN'S PREFACE TO  
"VINDICIÆ JUDÆORUM."

THANK kind providence, that I live to see yet, in my old days, the happy period, when the Rights of Man are beginning to be taken to heart, in their true extent.<sup>1</sup> When, hitherto religious toleration and mutual forbearance amongst mankind have been in question, it was the weaker and oppressed party which sought relief under the protection of reason and humanity. The dominant party either had no sense of those qualities, or, from experience, alas! but too common, presumed that with an equal share of power and opportunity, the other would not act a whit better, and thereon founded a suspicion that it was only intended to wrest the haft out of its hand, in order to direct the point of the weapon at itself. They seemed not to consider, that such suspicions could not but perpetuate animosity and discord amongst men; that the spirit of conciliation, as well as of charity, require the first step to be made by the stronger. It is he, who must wave his superiority, and make

the offer, if the weaker is at all to gain, and return confidence. If it be the design of Providence, that brethren shall love one another, it is evidently the duty of the stronger to make the first proposal, open his arms, and, like Augustus, cry out, "Let us be friends." However, all that has been hitherto written and argued about toleration, concerned only the three religious parties favoured in the German empire, and, at most, some of their collateral branches. Of Pagans, Jews, Mahometans, and Theists, either no notice at all was taken, or, at most, for the sake of rendering the argument in favour of universal toleration the more disputable. "According to your principles," said the opponents, "we should not only have to entertain and tolerate Jews and Theists, but to let them participate in all the rights and offices of citizens, into the bargain!" And, really, it was a woeful sight, how its advocates did wind and twist to keep clear of that objection. For aught I know, the editor of 'The Fragments' was the first German writer who claimed toleration even for Theists\*. Both Lessing and Dohm, the former a philosophical poet,\* the latter a philosophical statesman,† conceived the grand aim of providence, viz. the destin-

\* *Nathan der Weise*, a dramatic poem, in five acts.

† On the Civil Improvement of the Jews. *Die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden*.

ation of man, conjointly with the rights of man. And, at the same time, an admirable monarch not only followed the same principles, but also formed a plan commensurate to his vast sphere of action, the carrying into execution of which seems to require more than human powers; and he is now setting to the work.

I am at too great a distance from the closets of the great and whatever has any influence there, to be able to take any part, or co-operate in that great work. I live in a country, in which one of the wisest sovereigns that ever ruled over men made the arts and sciences flourish, and rational liberty of thinking become so universal, that the effects thereof extend to the humblest inhabitant of his realm.<sup>3</sup> Under his sceptre, I met with opportunity and inducement to cultivate my mind, meditate on my own destination, as well as on that of my brethren, and inquire, as far as I was able, into man, destiny, and providence. But from the great, generally, and from any commerce with them, I have always been far removed. I all along lived retired, and felt neither inclined, nor called upon, to intermeddle with the affairs of the active world; and, from the beginning, my society has been confined to a small circle of friends, who pursued the same road with me. At that obscure distance, I still stand, awaiting with dutiful pa-

tience, what it may please an all-wise and all-kind Providence, to let result from this.

In the meanwhile, I take pleasure in speculating, with Mr. Dohm, not only on the reasons, which a philanthropist may have to favor the political and civil admission of my brethren, but also on the multifarious difficulties with which it is attended, and, perhaps, will be, partly, thrown in the way of it, by the nation itself whom it is to improve; and in comparing them to the benefits which may accrue to the state which should succeed, first, in converting those native aliens into citizens, and, in rendering serviceable a number of heads and hands born to serve it. As a philosophical statesman, methinks Mr. Dohm has nearly exhausted the subject, and left but scanty gleanings for others. It is not a vindication of Judaism, or of the Jews either, that he wants to write. He merely conducts the cause of mankind, and defends their rights. And fortunate will it be for us, if that cause become at once ours; if there be no such thing as urging the rights of mankind, without at once claiming ours.<sup>4</sup> The philosopher of the *eighteenth* century takes no notice of difference of dogmas and opinions, he beholds in man *man* only. Let us compare to this, what a Rabbi of the *seventeenth* century, who is conducting the cause of his nation before the British senate,

advances in their vindication, and by what arguments he seeks to prevail on it to receive his brethren in England. It is known, that in the reign of Edward I, the Jews were driven out of England, and not until under Cromwell, did they obtain leave to return thither. It was Rabbi Manasseh who effected this.<sup>5</sup> He was a man of great rabbinical learning, also well versed in other sciences, and withal inspired with ardent zeal for the welfare of his brethren. He obtained at Amsterdam, where he resided as *Chacham*, or chief Rabbi, of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation, the necessary passports; and, accompanied by some friends, repaired to London, to support the cause of his people with the Lord Protector (by whom he had been long held in esteem), and before the Parliament. The difficulties he met with, were, however, greater than he had anticipated; and he composed this tract at a time when he almost despaired of prospering in his undertaking. Nevertheless he succeeded at last; and the Jews were re-admitted, on what may be called bearable terms. About the same time, a certain Edward Nicholas published "*Apologia per los Judæos*," and Toland too is known to have taken up the pen in their defence. At the present juncture, when so much is said and written both for and

against the Jews, the Rabbi's tract appears to me well worth translating.

It is curious to observe how prejudice assumes the forms of all ages, on purpose to oppress us, and put obstacles in the way of our civil admission. In former superstitious days, it was wantonly defiling sacred things: stabbing crucifixes and setting them bleeding; secretly circumcising Christian babes, and then feasting our eyes with mangling them; using Christian blood at our Passover; poisoning wells, &c. &c.; unbelief, stubbornness, witchcraft, and all manner of diabolical doings, which were imputed to us, and for which we were despoiled of our property, driven into exile, stretched on the rack, and even put to death. Now, times are altered; those calumnies have no longer the desired effect. Now, it is even superstition and ineptitude; want of moral feelings, taste, and good manners; unfitness for the arts, sciences, and useful trades, and particularly for the military and civil services; an unconquerable proneness to cheating, usury, and all nefarious practices, which have come in the place of those grosser vituperations, for the sake of excluding us from the mass of efficient citizens, and casting us out of the maternal bosom of the state. Formerly, all imaginable pains were taken with us, and

several establishments provided for the purpose of making of us—useful citizens? O, no;—Christians! And our being so very obstinate and stiff-necked, as not to let ourselves be converted, was held a sufficient reason to pronounce us a useless burden on society, and to invent, of such reprobate monsters, every possible horror and infamy, which might subject us to the contempt and abhorrence of the rest of mankind.<sup>6</sup> Now, the zeal for converting has abated, and we are utterly neglected. We are still kept far removed from arts, sciences, useful trades, and the professions of mankind; every avenue to improvement is still blocked up to us, and the want of refinement made a pretence for our oppression. They tie our hands, and scold us for not making use of them.

Of those inhuman accusations of the Jews, which bear the characteristics of the times and the cloistral cells in which they were hatched, Mr. Dohm, with great tact, scarce takes a cursory notice. With the class of readers for whom Mr. Dohm takes up his pen, those monstrous charges cannot find belief, and much less require serious refutation. He, therefore, strictly confines himself to the rebutting of such as are more in keeping with these, our highly civilised and cultivated times; and to the encountering of philosophical prejudices with philosophical soundness. Yet,



neither the intelligence, nor the spirit of enquiry of our age, have trodden down all the tracks of barbarism, in history. Many a legend of those times stood its ground, because no one took it into his head to doubt it. Some are backed by such weighty authorities, that every one has not the face to declare them downright figments and slander; others still live in their effects, notwithstanding they themselves have been discredited long ago. But calumny, in general, is of that envenomed nature, that it will leave behind an impression on men's minds, though its falsity be ever so palpable, and admitted on every hand. In many a good city of Germany, even now, none of the circumcised, though he have paid excise on his body [Leibzoll] at the gate, is suffered to go about in broad-day without a soldier by his side, for fear he should decoy a Christian child, or poison a well. At night, though ever so strictly guarded, he is not trusted at all within its walls, on account of his known commerce with evil spirits. Who does not recollect having read in the history of Brandenburg, that the elector Joachim the second was poisoned by Lippold the Jew, his physician in ordinary? This has been so often told and retold by annalists, that the most intelligent man could not but take its authenticity for granted, and set it down as an historical fact. That

the legend has, for all that, been traced to the true source, is owing to the inquiring genius of Dr. Mochsens, the present physician in ordinary.\* It appears that the story is so far true, that the elector Joachim the second did die, and that at the time, there was a Jew called Lippold. As for the remainder, Lippold was not a physician, and the elector was everything but poisoned, as Dr. Mochsens substantiates by proofs impossible to suspect. Lippold was the elector's valet, and master of the Mint, two court-offices, which seldom gain a Jew many friends. According to the unanimous declaration of contemporary records and original minutes, the elector died of an open ulcer on one of his legs, the discharge of which had been stopped by his having caught a cold. The valet and master of the Mint was accused of fraud in his accounts, and arrested. But when the investigators found him innocent of the charge, and his liberation could no longer be deferred, they had recourse to accusations of quite a different nature. Some burgher-militia-men pretended to have heard Lippold's wife, when quarrelling with her husband, cry out to him, in a passion: "If the elector did but know what a wicked knave thou art, and what villanies thou art capable of achieving, by means of that magic

\* *Geschichte der Wissenschaften in der Mark Brandenburg*, p. 513, et seq.

book of thine, thou wouldst have been a cold corpse long ago :” and so Lippold was delivered over to the criminal judge. What Dr. Mochsens observes, on this occasion, in excuse of the sovereigns of those times, is very just. “In those days,” says he, “princes were satisfied with having fully done their duty, when they left the indictments and examinations to counsellors versed in the law ; and these, on their part, believed they acted conformably to the laws, when they fulfilled them to the letter.” In this manner, barbarous laws certainly are more pernicious than no laws at all. According to the criminal Corpus Juris of the emperor Charles V. §. 44, Lippold was delivered over to the public executioner, to be questioned by him on the rack ; and that functionary acquitted himself so well in his task, that the culprit acknowledged every thing they wanted to get out of him ; namely, that he had managed by magic to win the elector’s favour, and finally poisoned him. This confession, it is true, he, a long while refused to repeat publicly ; but the executioner contrived to make him do even that. In consequence of which, “he was torn with red-hot pincers, in ten different parts of the town ; then broken on the wheel, by a blow on each leg and arm. His body was quartered, and his entrails burnt, along with the magic book, on a

stage built for that purpose in the new market at Berlin."† A more than ordinary great mouse,\* which came running forth from underneath the stage, and which no one could take for anything else but the demon of sorcery, delivered the spectators from all remaining doubt that the delinquent had been condignly dealt with. Lippold's supposed crime, Dr. Mochsens further tells us, had a great influence on the Jewish community at large in the marquisate of Brandenburg. They were indicted, tried, and found guilty. "They were obliged to sell their possessions, pay to the court, inventorizing and examining dues, as also the withdrawing tax,<sup>8</sup> and forthwith to leave the country." And thus the story, that the Jews had been driven out of the land for having poisoned the elector Joachim the second, has passed from one person to another, and maintained itself even in our enlightened times.

Nor does that enlightenment extend so far yet as to render those grosser charges quite innocuous. It is not long since the Jewish community at Posen were accused of having murdered a Christian child for the celebration of Passover. Two pious Rabbins, as the leading men amongst the congregation, were thrown into a dungeon,

\* Mr. Mochsens quotes the author, who preserved that important circumstance for posterity.

and questioned on the rack, as is the custom in that country. I shall spare the humane feelings of my readers, the details of these tortures: they were the most horrible that barbarity ever indulged itself in. Yet the sufferers were firm enough not to let them wring a confession from them, although they were tormented until they expired under the hands of the fiends. Merciful God! these men were innocent of the murder of the child, if really a murder had been committed, which remains yet very doubtful— as innocent as I and my readers are. Still, that congregation has to pay off the enormous sum they were obliged to borrow, partly to defray law expences, and partly to avert even more heavy calamities. Only a few years ago, the same thing would have been repeated in the vicinity of Warsaw, if the wise king of Poland and some enlightened magnates had not, fortunately, suspended the legal proceedings, until the Jews succeeded in bringing the calumny to light. I have had an opportunity of conversing with many intelligent, and, in other respects, not illiberal Christians, from Poland and other Catholic countries, who could not entirely divest themselves of those prejudices against my brethren. They would always appeal to the regular legal form, in which trials of that kind had so often been conducted; to the unexceptionable

character of the judges who managed them; and to the accused's own confession, which is said to have agreed frequently too well with circumstances and with the depositions of witnesses, to have been a mere fiction suggested by the torture of the rack. Candid minds, like these, may, perhaps, be induced to entertain different opinions by Rabbi Manasseh's arguments; and still more by the awful expurgation-oath which he takes in the name of the whole Jewish nation, and which I am ready to repeat after him with a clear conscience. For, that barbarous laws are of the most terrible consequences the more legally the proceedings are conducted, and the more rigidly the judge pronounces after the letter, is an important truth which cannot be too often inculcated. The only way of amending unwise laws, is by deviating from them; as one would correct mistakes in calculation by other wilful mistakes. Both Calas and Waser were, perhaps, condemned by unexceptionable judges, and in a very legal form too.<sup>9</sup>

But all our arguments and oaths are vain, when our opponent is determined not to hear—when by-ends resist conviction—or when his mind is so biassed by prejudice that he refuses to pay the requisite attention to your reasoning. You may cut through all the roots of an antiquated prejudice, and yet not entirely deprive it of nutriment, it

will, at all events, suck it out of the air. Did not a reviewer of Mr. Dohm's work, in the Göttingen Advertiser, bring charges against us, right or wrong, charges which one would not expect to hear from an author of our age, at least of one living at that true seat of the Muses? He is not ashamed even of reproaching us, the present living Israelites, and laying to our charge the wickedness of which our forefathers were guilty in the Desert; without considering that, notwithstanding those remarkable vices, legislating God, or, to speak more fashionably, legislating Moses, still found a possibility of transforming that rude horde into a regular and flourishing nation—a nation which can produce sublime laws, an excellent polity, wise regents, valorous captains, upright judges, and happy citizens; without looking at himself, and considering what sort of civilization that of his own forefathers in the northern forests and swamps might be, at the corresponding period of time, from whom, nevertheless, reviewers in the Göttingen Advertiser have sprung now-a-days. In a word, Reason and Humanity raise their voices in vain; for hoary Prejudice has completely lost its hearing.

But while reasonable arguments are unanimous in adjudging to the Jews also, a participation in the rights of man, it is not thereby understood

that even in their present debased condition, they may not be useful to the state, or that their increase might possibly become injurious to it. On this, too, Rabbi Manasseh's reasoning in this tract, well deserves attention, since in his days, he could seek for none but a very qualified admission of his brethren in England. Holland alone affords an example which may remove all doubts on that head. There, the increase of the Jews has never yet been complained of; although the means of getting a living are almost as scantily doled out to them, and their privileges almost as stunted as in many a province of Germany. "Ay," it is said, "but Holland is a commercial country; and therefore cannot have too many trading inhabitants." Agreed. But I should like to know, whether it was commerce which drew people thither; or whether commerce was not rather drawn there by the people? How is it, that so many a city in Brabant and the Netherlands, with equal or perhaps superior commercial accommodations, comes so much behind the city of Amsterdam? What makes peopledso crowd together on a barren soil, in marshes not intended by Nature to be inhabited; and by industry and art metamorphose lone fens into a garden of God, and invent resources for a comfortable existence which excite our admiration? What else but liberty, mild government,



equitable laws, and the hospitable manner in which men of all complexions, garbs, opinions, manners, customs and creeds, are admitted, protected, and quietly allowed to follow their business? Nothing else but these advantages have produced, in Holland, the almost superabundant blessings and exuberance of prosperity, for which that country is so much envied.<sup>10</sup>

Generally speaking, "Men superfluous to the state, men, of whom a country can make no use at all," seem to me terms which no statesman should make use of. Men are all more or less useful: they may be employed in this or that way; and more or less promote the happiness of their fellow-creatures and their own. But no country can, without serious injury to itself, dispense with the humblest, the seemingly most useless of its inhabitants, and to a wise government, not even a pauper is one too many—not even a cripple altogether useless. Mr. Dohm, in the introduction to his work, has, indeed, tried to determine the quantity which population may not exceed, without overfilling the country and becoming injurious to it. But I think that, with any proviso whatever, no legislator should give this the least consideration; there is no arrangement to oppose the accumulation of souls, no measure to put a stop to increase, that does not tend far more to injure the improvement

of the inhabitants, the destination of man and his happiness, than is done by the apprehended overfilling. In this, let them depend upon the wise ordering of Nature. Let it quietly take its course, and on no account place impediments in its way, by unseasonable officiousness. Men will flock to places where they can get a living ; they multiply and crowd together where their activity has free play. Population increases as long as genius can discover new means of earning. When the sources become exhausted, it instantly stops, of course ; and if you make a vessel too full on one side, it will, of itself, discharge the superfluity on the other. Nay, I venture to assert, that such an instance never occurs ; and that there never has been a thinning or emigration of the people, which was not the fault of the laws or the management of them. As often as, under any government whatsoever, men become a nuisance to men, it is owing to nothing but the laws or their administrators.

In some modern publications, there is an echo of the objection,—“ The Jews are an unproductive people ; they neither till the ground, cultivate the arts, nor exercise mechanical trades ; and, therefore, do not assist Nature in bringing forth, nor give her produce another form, but only carry and transport the raw or wrought commodities of various countries from one to another. They

are, therefore, mere consumers, who cannot but be a tax upon the producer." Nay, an eminent, and, in other respects, a very acute author, the other day, loudly complained\* about the hardship, of the producer having to maintain so many consumers, to fill so many useless stomachs. Mere common sense, thinks he, shews that the price of the products of nature, and of the arts, must be run up the greater the number of intermediate buyers and sellers, who themselves add nothing to the stock, yet will have them. Accordingly he gives the State this advice and friendly admonition, either not to tolerate Jews at all, or to allow them to exercise agriculture and mechanical trades.

The conclusion may be heartily well meant, but so much weaker are the premises, which appear so plain and irrefutable to the author. According to his ideas, who are precisely called *producers* and *consumers*? If he alone produce who co-operates in the composing of some tangible thing, or improves it by the labour of his hands, the largest and most valuable portion of the state consists of mere consumers. According to those principles, both the learned and military professions produce nothing, unless the books written by the former may be said to form an exception. From the trading and working classes, there are first to be

\* In the *Ephemeriden der Menschheit*.

deducted, merchants, porters, carriers by land and by water, &c. and at the upshot, the class of producers, as they are called, will consist chiefly of ploughboys and journeymen mechanics. For landholders and master-manufacturers, now a-days, rarely put their hands to the work themselves. Thus, with the exception of that certainly useful, but considerably minor portion of the population, the state would be composed of individuals who neither cultivate the productions of nature, nor improve them by the labour of their hands—that is, of mere consumers; and will it be therefore said also, of useless stomachs which are a burden to the producer?

Here the absurdity is palpable : and as the conclusion is just, the error must lodge somewhere in the antecedents. And so it does. Not only *making something* but *doing something* also, is called *producing*. Not he alone who labours with his hands, but, generally, whoever does, promotes, occasions, or facilitates anything that may tend to the benefit or comfort of his fellow-creatures, deserves to be called a producer; and, at times, he deserves it the more, the less you see him move his hands or feet. Many a merchant, while quietly engaged at his desk in forming commercial speculations, or pondering, while lolling on his sofa, on distant adventures, produces, in the main, more

than the most active and noisy mechanic or tradesman. The soldier too produces; for it is he who procures the country peace and security. So does the scholar produce, it is true, rarely anything palpable to the senses, yet matters, at least, equally valuable, such as wholesome advice, information, pastime and pleasure. The expression, "that there is more produced by any Paris pastrycook, than by the whole Academy of Science," could have escaped a man like Rousseau, only in a fit of spleen. The well-being of a country at large, as well as of every individual in it, requires many things both sensual and intellectual, many goods both material and spiritual; and he who, more or less directly or indirectly, contributes towards them, cannot be called a mere consumer; he does not eat his bread for nothing; he produces something in return.

This, I should think, places the matter in a far clearer light to common sense. And as to intermediate buyers or sellers, in particular, I will undertake to maintain, that they are not only far from prejudicial, either to the producer or consumer, provided abuses be prevented, but very beneficial and almost indispensable to both; nay, that, through their agency, commodities become more useful, more in demand, and also cheaper; while the producer gains more, and is thereby enabled

to live better and happier, without any extraordinary exertion of his strength.

Imagine a workman who is obliged to go himself to the agriculturist for the raw material, and also to take it himself to the warehouse-man in a manufactured state ; who has to mind that he lays in, at a certain season of the year, an adequate stock of the former, and take the latter, as often as he has occasion, to one who may just have a demand for it, and will become a purchaser. Compare to him, the workman to whom the intermediate dealer brings the raw material into his house, sells it to him for ready money or on credit, according to his present exigency and circumstances. At times he also takes the wrought articles off his hands, and disposes of them to the shopkeeper, at convenient opportunities. What a deal of time and trouble must not the former save, which he may devote to his in-door business, and which the latter is obliged to waste in chance travelling and tarrying about the country, in ever so many avocations, or convivialities, which either he dare not or cannot prevail upon himself to decline. How much more, then, will the former, with the same degree of exertion, work and produce ; and thus be able to afford higher prices, and live comfortably notwithstanding? Will not, real industry be promoted thereby, and does the intermediate dealer

still deserve to be called a useless consumer? This argument in favour of the petty buyer and seller becomes still more forcible, when applied to the wholesale dealer, to the merchant proper, who removes and transports the productions of nature and the arts from one country to another, from one hemisphere to another. He is a real benefactor to the state, to the human race at large, and therefore, every thing but a useless stomach living at the producer's charge.

I said, "provided abuses be prevented." These principally consist in the manœuvres and tricks resorted to by the intermediate dealers in raw materials, to get the grower's fate into their power, and become the rulers of the prices of things, by depressing them in the hands of the first holder, and driving them up in their own. These are great evils, which crush the producer's industry and the consumer's enterprize, and which should be counteracted by laws and by the police regulations. Not indeed summarily, by prohibiting, excluding, or stopping; and least of all, by granted or winked-at monopoly or forestalling. Such measures either aggravate the evils which it is intended to avert by them, or bring on others still more ruinous. Rather let them seek to abate, as much as practicable, all restrictions, abolish all chartered companies, abrogate all preferring and

excluding exceptions, grant the humblest dealer and jobber in raw materials, equal rights and privileges, with the first house of commerce ; in one word, let them every way promote competition, and excite rivalry, and, amongst the intermediate dealers, whereby the prices of commodities will be kept in equilibrium, arts and manufactures encouraged on the one hand, and, on the other, every one enabled to enjoy the industry of his fellow-creatures without excessive exertion. The consumer may live comfortably without luxury, and the artist yet maintain himself respectably. It is by competition only, by unlimited liberty, and equality of the laws of buying and selling, that those ends can be obtained ; and, therefore, the commonest salesman or buyer-up, who takes the raw material from the grower to the workman, or the wrought from him to the grower, is of very considerable utility to the prosperity of the arts, manufactures, and commerce in general. He causes the raw material to maintain its price to the advantage of the grower, while, for the benefit of the workman, and the prosperity of trades, he seeks to spread the products of industry about in all directions, and to render the comforts of life more known, and more generally serviceable. On this consideration, the pettiest trafficking Jew is not a mere consumer,



but a useful inhabitant (citizen, I must not say), of the state—a real producer.

Let it not be said, that I am a partial advocate of my brethren ; that I am magnifying everything which may go in their favour, or tend to their recommendation. Once more I quote Holland. And when the subjects treated of are industry and commerce, what country in the world can be more aptly quoted ? It is merely through competition and rivalry, through unlimited liberty and equality of the privileges of buyers and sellers, of whatsoever station, quality, or religious persuasion they be, that all commodities have their price there, with but a moderate difference as to buying and selling ; while rivals and competitors bring both the parties to a mean, which tends to their mutual advantage. Hence, with a small sacrifice, you can buy or sell any article whatsoever, at all seasons of the year, and at all times of the day, nowhere better, and with greater ease, than at Amsterdam.

I have yet some remarks to make on the granting of *Autonomy*,\* and the administering of it, of which Mr. Dohm speaks, which I beg leave to insert here. — Autonomy, granted to a colony, either extends to civil matters, or relates to re-

\* *Autonomy*. Governing themselves by their own laws.

ligion, and ecclesiastical affairs. The former concerns merely the *Meum* and *Tuum* amongst the members of the colony. There every thing depends on agreements. The rights to property, and whatsoever is connected therewith, are alienable rights, which may be yielded and assigned to others by voluntary determination and agreement; and when this is done on the required conditions, they instantly become the property of him to whom they have been yielded; and he cannot be dispossessed of them without injustice. There, every thing may be left to the agreements and covenants of the colony amongst themselves. If they think it preferable to have the litigations of their members amongst themselves decided by their own laws, according to their own forms, the State evidently may indulge them in it, without any prejudice to itself. Now, as Mr. Dohm very justly observes—"Since the Jews consider as divine commandments also those written laws of Moses which bear no reference to Judea, or to the ancient juridical and ritual system, as well as the deductions from, and elucidations and interpretations of, the same, either received by oral tradition, or got at by methodical ratiocination, they may be allowed to bind their members amongst themselves by a voluntary covenant, to have their disputes judged and decided by their own laws.

“Are those decisions to be given by Jewish or by Christian judges?” My reply is: “By the judges in ordinary; no matter whether they follow the Jewish or any other religion.” When the members of the State, whatever their opinions may be on theological questions, equally enjoy the rights of man, that difference cannot form the least consideration. The judge is to be a conscientious man, and to perfectly understand the laws after which he administers justice to his fellow-men, let him think of theological subjects according to what doctrine he pleases. If the government deem him fit for the judicial office, and appoint him to it, his legal decisions must stand good. Do we not place our health, our life, in the hands of a physician, without any regard to difference of religion; why then not equally our property in those of a judge? A conscientious physician who values his art will treat to-day, after all its rules, the very malefactor who is to be executed to-morrow, and seek to cure him of his complaint. So will a judge, if he have the feelings of a man, bestow justice on all parties in respect to the interests of *this* life, whether, according to his own principles, they will be saved or damned in the *next*. The above-quoted Göttingen reviewer, indeed, thinks that the Jews would have no confidence in a Christian judge’s knowledge of

their laws. Mr. Dohm, however, is borne out by, and can produce the evidence of, learned Christians, who not only *suppose* the contrary, but declare themselves to have frequently *experienced* it. And if any distrust of that sort had really prevailed, would it not have been natural; as, hitherto, the learned amongst the Christians so little concerned themselves about our jurisprudence?

But how is it to be in ecclesiastical matters, in things which relate to the religion of the colony? How far is the jurisdiction of every colony in religious matters, and that of the Jewish in particular, to extend over its members? What authority may it exert, what degree of force may it use, to compel its members to analogy and purity of doctrine and life? How far may it stretch forth its ecclesiastical arm, to correct or expel the refractory, and put the stray and deviating again into the right track?

*Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, ecclesiastical authority and power!* I must confess, these are phrases which convey to me no intelligible idea, nor does my *Adelung*\* afford me any information there. I know of no rights over either persons or things, which can possibly have any connexion with, or dependance

\* *Adelung*, once a celebrated lexicographer, and the *Johnson* of Germany; but long since thrown in the back-ground by *Campe* and others.

on doctrines,—of no rights which men acquire when they concur in certain propositions relative to immutable truths, or forfeit, when they cannot or will not concur in them ; and, still less do I know of any right and power over opinions, that are supposed to be conferred by religion, and to belong to the church. True divine religion arrogates no dominion over thought and opinion ; it neither gives nor takes away any claim to earthly goods, any right to fruits, domain, or property ; it knows of no other force than that of winning by argument, of convincing and rendering blessed by conviction. True divine religion needs neither arms nor fingers for its use ; it is all spirit and heart.

By *Right* is meant the quality of doing or forbearing—the moral faculty of acting : namely, a voluntary act is just and moral, when it consists with the rules of wisdom and goodness, and that by which this consistency is acknowledged to exist, is called *a right*—any possible use of our faculties, any possible enjoyment of things, any possible evincement of our industry, not inconsistent with the laws of wise goodness. Now let me turn this idea whichever side I will, I cannot discover in it, any reference to dogmas and opinions, in respect to immutable truths. How can my assenting, or not assenting to general propositions extend or restrict that quality, give me, or deprive me of, a moral

dominion over persons and things, over their use and fruits? In which way does a *modus acquirendi*, (another quality to appropriate to ourselves certain things, as means of our happiness, and use them at our will and pleasure), arise out of an opinion, or yet out of the system of all opinions together? What common characteristic have those two disparities *right* and *opinion*, that they can ever come together, and be brought in connexion, in any proposition? But if the laws of nature and of reason admit a right, founded on the receiving or rejecting of an opinion, there indispensably must be a way of uniting those two ideas in a proposition; and of clearly shewing, from the approbation which I give or refuse to a doctrine, why this or that evincement of my industry is or is not due to me; why, according to the immutable laws of wisdom and goodness, a certain use and enjoyment of the goods of this world are or are not granted me. I must confess, I do not see the possibility of the union.

But mankind may, perhaps, render such a union possible by *positive* laws and by covenants, or they may, by expressed or tacit agreement, mutually assume rights supposed to be founded on doctrine and opinion. And although such a thing be unknown in the state of nature, may not the state of society, the social compact, introduce such

a regulation, or actually, have introduced it? Have not covenants wrought so many changes in human nature, and in the system of its offices and rights? Why might they not also originate rights, which were *not* to be found in the state of nature?

By no means, I should think. As little as cultivation is able to accomplish a fruit of which nature has not furnished the germ; as little as art, by practice and perseverance, can bring forth a spontaneous motion, where nature has not placed a muscle; just as little can all the covenants and agreements of mankind create a right, of which the foundation is not to be met with in the state of nature. By covenants merely, *imperfect* rights may be changed to *perfect*;—indeterminate duties to determinate ones. What I am bound to perform to the human race at large may, by a covenant, be limited to a certain person; and thereby, the indeterminate internal duty to mankind be transformed into a determinate external duty to that person. This same person, who had before only an imperfect right to expect of the human race, or of nature generally, a certain contribution towards his happiness, acquires by the covenant, a perfect external right to demand that contribution of me, or of my substance, and to enforce it. But as, in a state of nature, all *positive* duties of man to each other, all obligations to act or perform, are mere

*imperfect* duties and obligations, many of them may, and must be determined, further limited, and transformed into perfect ones, in a state of society. But where, without a covenant, neither duties nor rights can be imagined, all the covenants between men, all their understandings, are empty sounds and nothing else, words spent in the air without force or consequence. I do not, therefore, see how the quality of attaching prerogatives to opinions, a quality utterly alien to Nature, can belong to human society.

And, moreover, a jurisdiction over opinions, over our fellow-men's views of immutable, and necessary truths! What man, what society of men dare to arrogate it? As those opinions do not immediately depend on our will, the only right that belongs to us ourselves, is the right of examining them, of putting them to the rigid test of reason, and suspending our judgment until it has decided, and so on.

But that right is inseparable from the person; and, from its nature, can as little be alienated, parted with or made over to others, as the right of appeasing our hunger, or the liberty of breathing. Covenants about it are absurd, contrary to the nature and essence of pactions, and therefore, without any consequence or effect. We may bind *ourselves* by covenants, not to let certain volun-



tary acts depend upon our own judgment and determination, but to submit them to another man's opinion ; and, thereby renounce in our own judgment, as far as it may pass into an act, and be attended with consequences. But our judgment itself is an inseparable, immoveable, and accordingly, an unalienable property. That distinction, however nice it may seem, is of the utmost importance here, if we would not confound ideas, and involve ourselves in absurd conclusions and discrepancies. Foregoing one's opinion so as not to act thereon, is one thing ; and giving up one's opinion itself, another. Acting rests immediately with our will and pleasure ; opinion does not. Thus the mother-nation itself is not qualified to attach the enjoyment of any worldly good or privilege to a doctrine particularly pleasing to it, or to reward or punish the adopting or rejecting thereof ; and how can it concede to the colony that which is not in its own power ?

I can scarcely conceive how a writer of Mr. Dohm's great judgment could say : " As all other religious societies have a right of expelling members, either for a limited time or for ever ; the Jewish should have it too ; and, in case of resistance of the Rabbi's sentence, be supported by the civil authorities." All societies have a right of expelling members ; religious ones only have not :

for it runs diametrically contrary to their principle and object, which is joint edification, and participating in the outpouring of the heart, by which we evince our thankfulness to God for the many bounties he bestows on us, and our filial trust in his sovereign goodness and mercy. Then, with what conscience can we deny entrance to dissenters, separatists, misbelievers, or sectarians, and deprive them of the benefit of that edification? For rioters and disturbers there is the law and the police; disorders of that kind may, nay must, be restrained by the secular arm. But a quiet and inoffensive attendance at the meeting may not be forbidden even to an offender, unless we purposely want to bar to him every road to reformation. The doors of the house of rational devotion require neither bars nor bolts. There is nothing locked up within, and, therefore, no occasion to be particular in admitting from without. Whoever chooses to be a tranquil spectator, or even to join in the worship, is right welcome to every pious man, at the hour of his own devotions.

Mr. Dohm, on this occasion, has perhaps taken things as they are, and not as they should be. Mankind seem to have agreed together to regard the external form of divine worship, that is the church, as a moral being, who has her own rights and claims on duties; and to grant to her more or

less authority to assert those rights, and enforce them by external power. It is not thought contrary to common sense, to style, in every country, one of those beings, The *Dominant*, who treats her sisters just as the whim takes her; at times using, to oppress them, the power delegated to herself, and, at others, generous enough to *tolerate* them, and concede to them as much of her own prerogative, of her own pretensions and consequence, as she thinks proper. Now as anathematizing and excommunicating is always the first right with which a dominant church enfeoffs tolerated ones, Mr. Dohm claims, for the Jewish religion, the same privileges which are granted to all other religious societies. As long as these still possess the right of expelling, he deems it an inconsistency, to put the Jewish under greater restrictions in that respect. But if, as it does evidently appear to me, religious claims to worldly things, religious power, and religious compulsory law, are words without a meaning,—and if generally expelling must be called irreligious,—then let us still be inconsistent, rather than heap abuses.

I do not find that the wisest of our forefathers ever did pretend to any such right as excluding individuals from religious exercises.

When King Solomon had finished the building of the temple, he included in his sublime dedication-

prayer, even strangers, a denomination in his days, of course, synonymous with idolators. He spread forth his hands towards heaven, saying: "Moreover concerning a stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm); when he shall come and pray toward this house; hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house which I have builded, is called by thy name."\* In the same manner our Rabbins directed the voluntary gifts, and votive-offerings of idolators to be accepted in the temple, and not to turn away the sacrifice of even an offender belonging to the nation itself, as long as he had not positively abjured his religion; in order, said they, that he may have an opportunity and inducement to amend.† So *they* thought at a period, when they had a little more power and authority to be exclusive in religious matters: and yet shall we presume to shut out dissenters from our *barely tolerated* religious meetings?

I shall forbear speaking of the danger there is

\* 1 Kings, viii. 41—43.

† Tract, *Chullin*, p. 5. Col. 1.

in entrusting *any one* with the power of excommunicating—with the abuse inseparable from the right of anathema, as indeed with every other form of church discipline, or ecclesiastical power. Alas! it will require ages yet, before the human race shall have recovered from the blows which those monsters inflicted on it. I can imagine no possibility of bridling false religious zeal; as long as it sees that road open before it; for a spur will never be wanting. Mr. Dohm fancies he is offering us an ample guarantee from all the like abuses, by taking for granted, that the right of anathema, entrusted to the colony, “will never reach beyond religious society, and have no effect at all on the civil; and this, because an expelled member of any church whatsoever may be a very valuable and estimable citizen notwithstanding: a principle in universal ecclesiastical law,” (continues he) “which should be no longer questioned in our days.”

But if universal ecclesiastical law, as it is called, at last acknowledges the important principle, in which I concur with all my heart, “that an expelled member of any and every church, may be a very useful and respected citizen notwithstanding,” the evil is far from being remedied by that weak reservation. For, in the first place, this very estimable and useful citizen, who, perhaps, is also internally a very religious man, may not like

to be debarred from all meetings for worship, from all religious solemnities; and may not like to be entirely without external religion. Now, if he have the misfortune to be thought a dissenter by the congregation he belongs to, and his conscience forbids him to join any other religious party established or tolerated in the state; must not this very useful and estimable citizen be exceedingly unhappy when his own congregation is allowed to exclude him, and he finds the doors of their religious assemblies shut against him? And it is possible, that he finds them so every where; for every religious community would perhaps turn him away by the same right. But how can the state allow any one of its useful and estimable citizens to be made unhappy by the laws? Secondly, what Church excommunication, what anathema is entirely without secular consequences, without any influence whatever on, at least, the civil respectability,—on the fair reputation of the excommunicated,—on the confidence of his fellow-citizens, without which no one can exercise his calling and be useful to the state? As the boundary-laws of this nice distinction between the civil and the ecclesiastical are barely perceptible to the keenest eye, it becomes truly impossible to draw them so firmly and precisely, in any state, as to make them obvious to every citizen, and cause them to

have the desired effect in common civil life. They will ever remain dubious and undefined, and very frequently expose innocence itself to the sting of persecution, and blind religious zeal.

To introduce church-discipline, and yet not impair civil happiness, seems to me a problem, which yet remains for politics to solve. It is the answer of the Most High Judge to Satan : " He is in thine hand but save his life,\*" or, as the commentators add : *Demolish the cask, but let not the wine run out.*

I shall not enquire how far the complaints, of late publicly made, about abuses of that kind, which a certain eminent Rabbi thought proper to commit, are or are not founded. The statement being *ex parte*, I am willing to believe that many a circumstance has been exaggerated ; that, on the one hand, the guilt of the accused has been softened down, the same as, on the other, the harshness of the proceedings was studiously over-rated. The case, it is reported, has been laid before the regular authorities, who will investigate it, and do the parties justice. However let the affair terminate as it may, I wish the particulars, as they figure on the protocols, may be published, to make either the over-hasty Rabbi or his open accusers ashamed of their conduct.

\* Job ii, 6.

But be this as it may, brotherly love has not yet made that progress amongst men, that we may disregard all fear and apprehension of this kind, from the introduction of church-discipline. As yet, there is not a clergy sufficiently enlightened, that such a right (if it exist at all) may be entrusted to them without any harm. Nay, the more enlightened they are, the less they will trust themselves in this; the more reluctant they will be, to take in their hands an avenging sword, which madness only thinks it can manage surely. I have that confidence in the more enlightened amongst the Rabbins, and elders of my nation, that they will be glad to relinquish so pernicious a prerogative, that they will cheerfully do away with all church and synagogue discipline, and let their flock enjoy, at their hands, even that kindness and forbearance, which they themselves have been so long panting for. Ah, my brethren, you have hitherto felt too hard the yoke of intolerance, and perhaps thought it a sort of satisfaction, if the power of bending those under you to such another yoke were allowed to you. Revenge will be seeking an object; and if it cannot wreak itself on strangers, it even tortures its own flesh and blood. Perhaps, too, you let yourselves be seduced by the general example. All the nations of the earth, hitherto, appear to have been infatuated by



the error, that religion can be maintained by iron force—doctrines of blessedness inculcated by unblest persecution—and true notions of God, who, as we all acknowledge, is love itself, communicated by the workings of hatred and ill-will only. You, perhaps, let yourselves be seduced to adopt the very same system; and the power of persecuting was to you the most important prerogative which your own persecutors could bestow upon you. Thank the God of your forefathers, thank the God who is all love and mercy, that that error appears to be gradually vanishing. The nations are now tolerating and bearing with one another, while to you also they are shewing kindness and forbearance, which, with the help of Him who disposes the hearts of men, may grow to true brotherly love. O, my brethren, follow the example of love, the same as you have hitherto followed that of hatred. Imitate the virtues of the nations whose vices you hitherto thought you must imitate. If you would be protected, tolerated and indulged, protect, tolerate and indulge one another. *Love, and ye will be beloved.*

MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

*Berlin, 19th March, 1782.*

# **SEARCH FOR LIGHT AND RIGHT;**

**AN EPISTLE TO MOSES MENDELSSOHN,  
OCCASIONED BY HIS REMARKABLE PREFACE TO  
RABBI MANASSEH BEN ISRAEL'S VINDICATION  
OF THE JEWS.**



## SEARCH FOR LIGHT AND RIGHT.

*Estimable Sir,*

THERE was a time, when I could not help blaming Lavater's obtrusion, in calling upon you in so singularly solemn a manner to embrace his Faith ; or, in the event of declining the proposal, demonstrate the unsoundness of the Christian religion. That step having been made in consequence of what fell from you in the course of a friendly conversation, which, probably, was not meant to go forth to the public, is what I shall never cease to think unjustifiable.

Now, however, I scarcely can resist the temptation of wishing that Lavater would make another attack on you, with all the force of his emphatic adjuration, so as actually to make a convert of you, or provoke you to refute a religion, which, it seems, you are neither willing, nor (from conviction) able to embrace.

At all events, certain candid expressions, in your excellent Preface to " Rabbi Manasseh Ben

Israel's Vindication of the Jews," give every searcher for truth a right to expect of you some further explanation ; lest you should appear unintelligible on a comparison with former statements.

Moses, the lawgiver of the Jews—and also of the Christian church, in so far as it sprang from the most ancient of religions—Moses spoke to his people with a veil on ; “because,” says tradition, “the children of Israel could not bear the radiance of his face.” The Christians boast, that at the Epoch of the New Covenant, as it is called, they saw Moses with his face uncovered. This figure of speech, I suppose, means nothing more than that there was a time, when the eyes of yet unenlightened nations could not bear truth in its full purity ; and that another arrived, when they ventured to look more steadily at the bright luminary, and thought themselves competent enough to speak out ; throw away the cloak, and promulgate unmasked, what, until then, had been clothed in hieroglyphics, and more than half way wrapped up in allegorical fancies.

When the indiscreet Lavater made rather too free with private conversation, for the sake of eliciting from you an avowal of the genuine sentiments of your heart respecting the Christian religion, to which he fancied you to be secretly partial, you too pinned a veil before your face, and spake to us

from behind a curtain, so that we could not have a full view of you. Every one took an interest in you, because of the unpleasantness you must, on many accounts, have been put to by that fervent enthusiast; every one was anxious to see how you would extricate yourself from the thorny predicament arising from so very direct and formal a challenge; and every one was pleased with the manner in which you brought yourself off.

Rightly considered, it was only by dexterous shifting, and by regular fencing tricks, that you then eluded Lavater's questions, than which none could be more pointed. We were *satisfied* with your answer merely because we were *dissatisfied* with Lavater, and felt that he did not use you well, in thus putting you publicly in embarrassment.

Now the case is different. Now, you yourself have openly given strong cause, why we should fairly look to you for fuller explanation, nay—why we should demand it. You yourself came forth, a moment, from behind the curtain, with looks beaming truth, and with no mask on. You raised, in the friends of truth, hopes of at last obtaining a full view of you, not a mere glimpse, and yet you vanished again instantaneously like an airy meteor. Can he, from whose lips one so dearly longs to be thoroughly instructed, derive

any pleasure from knowing the public to be baffled in their reasonable expectation, or, at any rate, ungratified? Now, worthy Mr. Mendelssohn, now, that you have, of your own accord, made the first step, you must not refuse to make the next—that of shewing yourself entirely. You bestowed on us a preface, which shot, with the vividness of lightning, through darkness; give us now a complete supplement; and with it, let the dawn of truth break forth into bright daylight, that they who love the light may walk in the light, and be guided by truth, in order to make sure steps.

In your former reply to Lavater, you all along insist on your adherence to the *Faith of your Forefathers*. But you never tell us what you properly mean by the *Faith of your Forefathers*. The substance of the Christian religion, too, is the Faith of your Forefathers, transferred to us, weeded of rabbinical institutions, and improved by additions, new, indeed; but nevertheless derived from the faith of your forefathers, and, interpreted as the consummation of Old-Testamentary prophecies.

In a wider sense of the term, the Faith of your Forefathers is that which the Christians profess; namely, the adoration of an only God; the keeping of the divine Ten Commandments delivered by Moses; and a belief in the gathering of all the nations of the earth, in one flock, under the uni-

versal sceptre of a Messiah announced by the prophets.

In a narrower sense, the expression, 'Faith of your Forefathers,' comprises only the proper Jewish ecclesiastical system, together with all scriptural appointments, rabbinical interpretations thereof, and statutory laws thereon, the whole constituting the proper distinctive doctrine, which separates the Jews from the faith of all other nations, and also from Christians.

From that latter particular faith, my dear Mr, Mendelssohn, you have, in your remarkable preface, wrenched the corner-stone, by stripping, in dry words, the synagogue of its original power; by denying it the right of expelling from the congregation of the holy, the backslider from the faith of your forefathers, entailing anathema and malediction on the heretic, and cutting him off from the people of Israel. It may consist with reason, that ecclesiastical law, in general, and the authority of spiritual courts to enforce or restrict opinions, is an inconceivable thing,—so that no case can be imagined to prove the foundation of such law—that art can create nothing of which Nature has not brought forth the germ: but rational as all you say about it may be, it is every way as discrepant with the faith of your forefathers, in a narrower sense, and with the principles of the



church, not as merely assumed by commentators, but even as expressly established in the books of Moses themselves. In common sense, religion without conviction is not possible at all ; and every forced religious act is no longer such. The keeping of the divine commandments from fear of the ecclesiastical penalties annexed to them is servile compliance, which, according to refined notions, cannot be acceptable to God. Still, it will not be denied, that Moses puts prohibitions and positive punishments on the neglect of religious observances. His statutes ordain that the Sabbath-breaker, the reviler of the divine name, and other infringers of his law shall be stoned, and their souls exterminated from amongst his people.

That rule, it is true, could be carried into practice, only so long as the Jews had an empire of their own ; so long as their Pontiffs were princes, or such sovereign heads of the people, as created princes, and governed them. But cease it must, as did the sacrifices, upon the Jews having lost territory and power, and, depending on foreign laws, found their jurisdiction circumscribed by very narrow limits. Still, that circumscription is merely the consequence of external and altered political relations, whereby the value of laws and privileges, consigned to quiescence, cannot be diminished. The ecclesiastical law is still there,

although it be not allowed to be put into execution. Your lawgiver, Moses, is still the drover, with the cudgel, who leads his people with a rod of iron, and would be sharp after any one who had the least opinion of his own, and dared to express it by word or deed. According to the ecclesiastical law, whoever presumed to speak against it, was, by that law, condemned to suffer the punishment of death and have his soul cut off from among his people.

The side which ancient history, all along, shews of that theocratical form of government is, that punishment immediately followed error and difference of opinion.

The people's lusting, in the wilderness, after the flesh-pots of Egypt, was, it is true, first gratified by whole flocks of quails; but immediately after punished by fiery serpents, because their appetite displeased the Lord. Korah and his faction considered themselves entitled to the privileges of the tabernacle, and of the priesthood, as well as Aaron, and his sons; and, behold, that numerous sept was swallowed up by the earth, men, women, children, and all!—The church had a poison of her own, the mysterious bitter water, or water of jealousy, whereby a woman's violation of the fidelity vowed to her husband was elicited, and punished on the spot with a marvellously fatal malediction.

Saul's disobedience in mistakingly sparing Agag's life, and preserving the prime of the captured sheep and oxen to sacrifice them to the Lord—though his intention was good—cost him his kingdom. David's ostentation in causing the people to be numbered that he might ascertain his power, reduced him to the dire necessity of choosing one out of three of the most horrible national calamities proposed to him, and of seeing seventy thousand of his subjects fall victims to a pestilence of his own selection. So even the original theocracy was a sort of tending with a rod of iron, and a system of external coercion throughout, which drove the nation collectively, and every individual member thereof, by main force and punishments, to adhere strictly to the precepts and statutes of the church, and to forbear from in the least expressing any dissenting opinion, without forthwith atoning for it in the most exemplary manner.

The whole ecclesiastical system of Moses, was not a mere instruction in, and a guide to, duties, but there was at the same time, the most rigid church-discipline attached to it. The arm of the church was weaponed with the sword of malediction. It is written (Deut. xviii, 15—19), “If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, &c. cursed shalt thou be in the city, and

cursed shalt thou be in the field ; cursed shall be thy basket and thy store, &c. &c.” And those denunciations were in the hands of, and dispensed by, the chief ministers of the church ; it was they who inflicted stoning to death, and expulsion from the community. And the final object of that expulsion was, not only that of being disqualified for every holy office at divine worship, but likewise of being lopped off from all civil relations and natural sympathies. It was not allowed to bestow bread or water on an excommunicated one, or to come to his assistance when he happened to fall in a pit, although he would unavoidably perish for want of help. According to the law, whoever had come in contact with a thing strangled, and thereby defiled himself, might regain admissibility to participation in divine worship, by the regularly prescribed ablutions and sacrifices ; but he, who held intercourse with an anathematized one, fell himself under anathema, and was loaded with the curses of the church. Anathema was the completest thing imaginable ; it was far prospective, and not without influence on civil well-being either. As no one durst commune with an anathematized one, he, was of course thrown out of employ, and of the means of earning a livelihood ; he could obtain neither food nor raiment at the hands of man ; neither aid nor deliverance in case of an

accident, in short, he was destined to perish, if never a stone had been flung at him.

Agreed and most unqualifiedly granted, that the foundation of such an ecclesiastical law is the most inconceivable thing in the world ;\* that it does not answer the purpose of bringing the strayed back into the bosom of the church ; but, on the contrary, removes them from it ; that its object cannot be to reclaim, but to undo them ; that the rigour of ecclesiastical law, excommunication, and anathema, cannot be exercised without the most serious injury to civil happiness ; that true worship ought to be a spontaneous homage, founded on one's own conviction, and practised out of love to the Father of all beings, and with perfect filial confidence in the mercy and goodness with which he lets his sun shine even for the erring, and his dew fertilise also the fields of the dissenter from religious dogmas ; that servile awe, extorted by penalties, cannot be an acceptable offering on the

\* The anonymous author of the tract entitled: "On the Abuses of Ecclesiastical Authority, and Secular Interference in Religious Matters," written against the Altona chief rabbi, thinks, that a limited church discipline might be allowed, provided it have no influence on civil well-being, and consist simply in a deprivation of spiritual benefits, and the benediction of the church. He seems to consider ecclesiastical law a social compact, by which one is bound to fulfil the conditions agreed upon, in order not to be excluded from the corresponding advantages.

altar of the God of Love. Granting and admitting all this, it certainly is very true, that the church has no need either of sword or scourge to bind the sceptic beneath a yoke repugnant to the standard of his intellect — to reconcile the dissenter to articles of faith, or to ruin the rebellious. But then, what becomes of the rabbinical statutes, passed into laws which Judaism is strictly bound to obey? What becomes of even the Mosaic law, and of its authority derived immediately from God himself? Armed ecclesiastical law still remains the firmest groundwork of the Jewish polity, and the master-spring of the whole machinery. Then, good Mr. Mendelssohn, how can you profess attachment to the religion of your forefathers, while you are shaking its fabric, by oppugning the ecclesiastical code established by Moses in consequence of divine revelation? The public, whose attention you have excited, is entitled to both an explanation of—and instruction in—so important a point.

Or are we to presume that the present very remarkable step of yours, is really one towards complying with the wishes formerly expressed to you by Lavater? No doubt but that affair induced you to give Christianity a further consideration; and more nicely to weigh, with your peculiar penetration, and the impartiality of an incorruptible

searcher after truth, the merits of its theology, as you had it before you in all its forms and modifications. By this time, perhaps, you approximate to Christianity, by shaking off the trammels of an oppressive church, and by now preaching the refined theory of a more liberal religion which is impressed with the stamp of proper divine adoration ; whereby we are to be emancipated from restraints and burdensome observances, and which limits true worship neither to Jerusalem nor to Samaria, but which, as our Saviour said, recognises the essence of religion in the creature's worship his Creator and God in spirit and in truth. Or, perhaps, the light in which you view the religion of your forefathers, is that in which all religions from the beginning must be viewed, namely, as a structure commenced in an age and clime of darkness, and which is to be constantly continued, altered and improved, until the yet far distant kingdom of light ensues ; as a structure which must become more and more perfect, in proportion as the temporary structures of political expediency are destroyed, and errors in the original design, though well meant at the time, are corrected, till finally nothing will remain but the temple itself, disencumbered of the paling and scaffolding, necessary and useful in constructing it, but now being properly cleared away, that the chaste edifice of genuine wor-

ship may no longer be disfigured, or the greater portion of its beauty and majesty hidden from our view.

Should this be the case, then, probably the dangerous ecclesiastical law will not be the only thing you would wish to be expunged from the religion of your forefathers. Allow me, good Sir, to submit to your opinion a few remarks, which appear to me of importance in the present age, when a great revolution in favour of your nation is dawning forth. You yourself speak, in your preface, of the unjust persecutions which have hung over the whole of your race ever since the destruction of their Capital, and the dispersion of the Jews amongst all the nations of the world. The Christian's silly hatred and absurd contempt of them, has, during many ages, denied them all pretensions to the universal rights of man. Their lives were sorely embittered; the privilege of walking on God's earth and breathing God's air, enjoyed freely by the brute creation, they had to purchase at an exorbitant rate. Here and there, for an enormous consideration, they might barely obtain a spot whereon to rest the soles of their feet; but the means of earning a reputable livelihood were withheld from them; while any fanatic shaveling had only to impute to them the purloining of a baptised babe, the poisoning of a public



well, or even account for drought, famine, or any other national calamity, as sent by God because of them ; and, in not a few instances, they were, in sportsman-like manner, hunted as so many wolves, then plundered by Christian fellow-subjects of their all, and every soul of them driven out of the country. You rejoice, that at your advanced age, you still live to see the times when Christians, ruling over your nation, begin to be something like men, and to look upon you too as men. To the Prussian state, in which you have attained a tranquil and uninsulted old age, you acknowledge yourself indebted for being what you are ; that is, a man not so borne down by penury and care as to be prevented from cultivating the nobler part of yourself, your mind. You owe it to that more early enlightened State, that general good sense duly appreciates your talents,—that the sincere goodwill, unalloyed with gloomy prejudice, which we bear the virtuous man, whom we so highly respect in you, animates you to become more and more a valuable acquisition to society,—that we so attentively listen to your instruction,—and that our eagerness to learn, keeps spurring you on to be a blessing to your contemporaries, and (perhaps, in a still higher degree) also to posterity, by the universally acceptable truths which flow from your lips.

You rejoice at the happy change in the Austrian

dominions, where orphan Israel finds a father in Joseph, who gives him also a share and inheritance in his States, by placing him on the same step with his other subjects, in the scale of humanity.

To your hitherto oppressed, persecuted, and despised nation, this is, indeed, the dawn of a happy era. But the rising sun does not illumine all the globe at once. It first becomes visible to only a part of the inhabitants of the earth, then gradually ascends, and, when it has reached its meridian, shines on a whole hemisphere. A time will come, when benign toleration, now but dawning forth, will, like the sun, diffuse its genial heat over all parts of the world, and when Christian States will find Israelites as useful as the Barbary States find them now.\* Already the wise and reasonable amongst the Christians are willing to love as brethren the good amongst your nation. This your own experience must tell you, Mr. Mendelssohn. Do not Christian men, superior to nursery, schoolboy, or popularly vulgar impressions, come forward at this time, and openly plead with frankness and energy, the cause of humanity on behalf of your nation; men, who make it their business to couch the Christian rabble, both high and low, for the cataract of old and inveterate infection, in order to enable them to recognise Jews

\* Jost, L. c. Vol. viii, p. 42. and Appendix, vol. ix.

as God's goodly and rational creatures? Are there not now sovereigns who listen to such appeals of humanity, and give fair hopes that they will not let all pious wishes remain unfulfilled, in their dominions.

To what may it be owing, that brotherly love does not more generally unite two nations, both of the same nature and substance, both worshipping the same God, and both coinciding in the fundamental points of their religion?

The civil disabilities, the exclusion from common privileges, and from a participation in the reciprocal offices of men and brethren—those hardships, Mr. Mendelssohn, about which your nation can feel only in a certain measure. justly aggrieved, are not the fault of Christians. In the religion of your forefathers itself, there is a tremendous breach which keeps your nation far removed from an unqualified sharing in both the public and private advantages of social life, which, in a state, are enjoyed by all citizens alike.<sup>1</sup>

I shall say nothing about your excessively strict keeping of the Sabbath, which is not the Sabbath of the nations amongst whom ye dwell. That inconvenience, perhaps, may not be one that least admits of mitigation, yet it will always be found impossible entirely to remove the difficulties which would attend the measure of employing Jews in

those capacities, whereby the state and the public service must necessarily be sufferers, as long as the duties thereof remain incompatible with the uncompromising Sabbath Laws. It may, however, be asked, whether the solemnization of the Rabbinical Sabbath, with all its nervous niceties and shivering scruples, should not be referred exclusively to the former territory and polity of the Jews; and amidst different relations, and under foreign dominion, be subordinate to the circumstances in which Providence itself has placed them since the abolition of their empire? The laws of sacrifices, I should think, were no less sacred and inviolable than those of the Sabbath; and yet they were discontinued on the breaking up of the Jewish State, because the practice could not be carried on under foreign governments. Then, why may not those of the Sabbath be equally subject to some modification, at least, when times, circumstances, and local situations, as little admit of their full observance?

But of still greater importance is the obstacle which the Jewish law places in the way of a more general intermixture with Christians. The very scorn and contumely which furnish the Jew no unjust grounds of complaint against the Christian, form an article of faith of the Jewish religion; according to which all other nations are deemed

unclean creatures, by a social intercourse with whom the people of God would be defiled.<sup>3</sup> All victuals, and certain drink prepared by the hands of a Christian, are, by law, an abomination to a Jew.<sup>4</sup>

Those laws, no doubt, in former times, were the offspring of pure precaution, to keep a people so prone to idolatry from associating with their pagan neighbours, and from being trepanned by them into the worship of idols. But that precaution has become quite supererogatory at present. Christians are no idolators; nor are the characteristic dogmas of Christianity of that nature, that by simple conviviality, a Jew might be brought to acknowledge certain mysteries of the Christian Church, which form the only distinction between the Christian and himself.

That the Jews may be more intimately incorporated with the State than they have been hitherto, in order that, considered as inhabitants and citizens the same as the Christians, they might enjoy equal benefits with them—it is essentially necessary that every breach which keeps the two persuasions at a distance from each other, should be filled up as soon as possible.

In England, Jews are less excluded from the privileges of natives than elsewhere. But, in return, the Jew there keeps less aloof from civic relations. In England, religion is no bar to a

matrimonial alliance between any two persuasions. There, marriage is no more than a civil contract; with the Roman Catholics only it is a sacrament.\* But here too, it may be asked; “How can Art produce anything of which Nature has not furnished the germ?” In marriage, as an act of nature, or, at most, as a civil treaty of alliance, surely, there is not a particle of dogmatical matter, that difference of religion should be concerned in it, any more than in an ordinary bill transaction between a Christian and a Jew!†

Would it be a paralogism, to conclude from the waving of one unessential point of religion, the harmless repeal of another? If it be possible to suppress, without any detriment to pure Judaism, ecclesiastical law, founded as it is on express Mosaic Statutes, why then should mere rabbinical reservations, subsequently devised, and opening so injurious a breach between Jew and Christian, not be set aside as well, for the good of the

\* Vienna, too, already offers three remarkable instances of marriages between Christian husbands and Jewish wives. There is now an action pending, concerning *Arnstein*, a converted Jew, one of those three instances, who expressly demands to continue cohabiting with his wife, still persevering in Judaism; and it is justly opined, that religious difference can form no cause of a legal separation. *According to the principles of wise Joseph, difference of religious opinions is not likely to be allowed to stand in the way of natural ties.*

nation ? But if the ecclesiastical laws, assumed to have been given by revelation, necessarily form a part of the Jewish religion, we must admit those Rabbiniisms also to do so ; and, in that case, you, good Mr. Mendelssohn, have renounced the religion of your forefathers. One step more, and you will become one of us.

As long as you forbear taking the other step, now that you have taken the first, the public is most justly entitled to expect of you, either a reason for so glaring a discrepancy from the religion of your forefathers, or the statement of any cause you may have to show why you should not publicly embrace Christianity, or the production of an argument against Christianity itself. According to your own principles, publicly enough expressed, not even opinions about religious matters are subject to ecclesiastical control ; and in its enquiries after truth, and in delivering its judgment, the human mind brooks no dictation. Constituted as our governments are, you may expect nothing but toleration even of dissentients, to whichever sect they may belong ; persecution of no one. The Priesthood of your own nation is kept in order by the authority of the Sovereign ; and many a one of the wise among them, even at this time of day, by his own good sense and enlightened principles, (should you think proper to

abate, here and there, some of the minor points in the religion of your forefathers), will honour truth in you, even if it should turn out to the prejudice of our ecclesiastical system. Self-conceited fools will rejoice at having saved their theory from you ; and at finding an opportunity of eclipsing you with their lustre. They will, indeed, be indignant at you, should you, unfortunately, be no thorough orthodox preacher. However, that indignation, in a mere declamatory tone, surely you will be able to bear ; and arguments, even if preponderating against you, must always be acceptable to you. The whole truth-loving public expect of every inquirer, “ Light and Truth,” and long to hear an approved thinker speak, in the evening of his life, without reserve, of the most important human concerns. By a more particular explanation, you either will use your endeavours to relieve your nation from many an antiquated and paralysing constraint, and to regenerate them into freer, and less abashed beings, who will unite themselves by mutual ties more closely to their fellow-men of another persuasion — men who already evince a strong and cordial disposition to regard them too as men and brethren, in a greater degree than heretofore,—or you will draw your brethren nearer to us, or, by removing our errors, ourselves to them. At all events, there will be,



at length, a foundation laid for our witnessing the glorious accomplishment of the Prophecy (for it is certainly more than a simple vision)—*that, in the latter days the Lord God will be the universal shepherd, and the whole rational creation only one flock.*<sup>5</sup> Truth—truth alone may lead to this—truth, either on your side, or on ours, *or if we go to meet one another, perhaps it will be found midway.* The present seems just to be the happy era, in which prevailing liberty still allows truth to occupy her proper station. In times of bigotry and inordinate enthusiasm, the triumph of truth would not be so easily achieved. Nay, even now the archdemon of fanaticism is busily hatching fresh imps, which may grow up so as to become extremely formidable to futurity. Already Magnetizers, and Ghost-seers,\* are furtively conspiring, that, with rallied vigour, they may once more trample free reason under foot. And it wants only another Ferdinand and Isabella, to let us see the spectre of the secretly working Inquisition gambol on smoking pyres, and on the yawning tombs of martyrs of truth; and Pharisaism as of old exhibit its miserable jugglery at the corner of every street.

That, indeed, would no longer be a time in which to seek truth. It would then be almost

\* And in our days, Speakers of Unknown Tongues, South-cotites, *cum multis aliis.* Ed.

wisdom to bend one's neck to the yoke of superstition ; and, in the most odious sense of the term, permit any creed forced upon one, however preposterous, to make a captive of one's understanding. But now, at the present remarkable juncture, there is nothing whatsoever to deter you from unfolding to us your sincere and real conviction. Now that you have so heroically battered down the once impregnable steel gate of ecclesiastical authority, what should keep you from celebrating your ovation in the very *Penetrals* of truth, which has been so long shut up to us ? You have put the hand to the plough, as the saying is ; and a man, firm in his conviction, as you are, and, on account of his extraordinary talents, called by Providence itself to the service and promulgation of truth, cannot possibly withdraw it again, and deprive the world of the final result of the long exercise of his mental energies, after having already given it, in his preface to Rabbi Manasseh Ben Israel's works, so beautiful a specimen, as one of the most elegant and valuable presents from the vast museum of his learning and information.

Your sincere admirer,

S.

*Vienna, 12th June, 1782.*

## POSTSCRIPT.

*Estimable Sir,*

ON reading with the most intense attention, and with a great deal of pleasure, your exceedingly remarkable preface to your translation from the English of "Rabbi Manasseh Ben Israel's Vindication of the Jews," I wished, with my whole heart and soul, that you had stepped a little more forward into the light, on that occasion, or that it would yet be convenient to you, to take off the veil behind which you still think proper to hide yourself. At that time, however, it was very far from my thoughts to express that desire, though ever so ardent, before the public at large ; being in hope that something to the same effect might come from a more distinguished and more influential pen than my own. This, to my great disappointment, did not take place ; and, accordingly, I let the matter rest, until by mere chance I lately obtained a sight of the manuscript of the prefixed epistle addressed to you, before it was consigned to the press. On me, at least, it had such an extraordinary effect, that I could not for a moment deny it, upon the whole, my perfect regard and approbation. My former wishes instantaneously revived, even more vividly and fervidly than at first ;

and notwithstanding the many scruples that arose within me, I found it impossible any longer to conceal from you the singular state of my mind, in consequence of your (in some respects) interesting ideas of religion. Do not, therefore, take it amiss, dear Sir,—not that I presume humbly to invite you, either to embrace the religion which I myself profess, or at once to refute the same, in case you should be incapable of embracing it—but that I entreat you, in the name and for the sake and benefit of all those who, like yourself, revere truth, and have it at heart, to speak resolutely and definitively of that which is, and always will be, of the first and most vital importance to the reflecting and conscientious of all religions. It never was a principle of mine, however it may have been of others, to tamper with those that have been brought up to any religion of which the leading features are,—the belief in a true and only God, the Creator of heaven and earth,—and in a future state—besides the inculcation of sincere virtue, and universal charity and brotherly love. And nothing would I eschew more, and with greater horror, than ever to become, either directly or indirectly, the instigator of arguments and objections to the religion in which I myself was born and brought up, from which I derive genuine happiness and contentment in this life, and fully

expect ineffable and eternal felicity in the next. But in the present case, your said remarkable preface must, in your own eyes, serve as an apology for my request. In that preface it would seem, at first sight, even to a not altogether attentive reader, as if you were wiping off only one of the blots which (as you yourself do not in the least hesitate to own in your answer to Lavater) deface the ancient religion of your forefathers. But, as far as my humble judgment goes, I think I have discovered in that very same preface certain marks and characteristics, by which I feel myself perfectly warranted to pronounce you as wide from the religion in which you were born and educated, as you are from the one which has been transmitted to me by my own forefathers : and, having done so, I shall not tax you with dissimulation, for telling us, in the answer, that you are equally as little partial to either Judaism or Christianity, but with being a contemner of revelation in general. In order to show what grounds I have for my assertion, I shall refer you to the first paragraph of your preface, and to page 109, where you say, "The doors of the house of rational devotion require neither bars nor bolts, There is nothing locked up within, and therefore no occasion to be particular in admitting from without. Whoever chooses to be a tranquil spectator, or even to join

in the worship, is right welcome to every pious man at the hour of his own devotions." Let me add, that, on account of your personal merits, such an explanation as I beg of you, may become the occasion of meditations which speculative men cannot make too often. I say meditations; because, in religion, the infallible word of God can alone be admitted as a rule.

What is there, worthy man, to deter you from at once openly acknowledging to the world that you are a Jew or a Christian, or neither one nor the other? My request, indeed, is not important enough to betray you into confessions; still I flatter myself, you will render to the call of truth, that homage, to which myself, simply an honest man, may not pretend.

Forgive my boldness, and be assured that it is with the sincere consent of my heart, that I call myself your reverer, although I have never yet intruded upon you, to declare by word of mouth, the esteem with which I am .

Your &c.

MOERSCHEL.

*Berlin, 3rd Sept. 1782.*



## A LETTER, &c.\*

*Sir,*

I REPLY to you in the German Language, for although I read and understand French, I do not write it; however, as the latter seems to come readiest to your tongue, you will please still to make use of it, whenever you mean again to afford me the pleasure of your correspondence.

From the affair with Mr. Lavater, I derived the advantage of becoming acquainted and getting into amicable relations with some most excellent men.

If we look only at what is said, written, and thought in public, we shall, in serious moments, almost be apt to fret at the slow progress of reason, the still continuing difference of judgment and opinion, amongst those who are accounted the

\* Of the authenticity of the above letter there is not the least doubt, as both the style and sentiments sufficiently warrant it, although it cannot be ascertained to whom it was addressed. The late Mr. Nicolai thought it was to a certain *Count de Lynar*.



most intelligent, and give up all further hope. But when, by alucky chance, we gain the confidence of men of real worth, we perceive, with pleasure, a greater degree of harmony than one would have imagined; and that, with all their external variances, the good of all countries and religions are much alike.

On the above-mentioned occasion I received many very impertinent letters; but also some, which, like yours, I hold inestimable. Yet give me leave to express myself rather hurt by one part of it. You seem to think it something most extraordinary, that I, a Jew, should speak in a respectful manner of the religion of Jesus; that I do not hate the Christians, launch no invectives at them, &c. I therefore, suppose, you give but few, if any, of my brethren credit for that sort of discretion. But you will do us justice.

Aben Ezra throws down only a few cursory remarks on the Christian religion; Maimonides, to my knowledge, never wrote against it; Orobio did:\* but with a degree of moderation that does

\* A contemporary of Spinoza, against whom he wrote. He was born in Spain of Crypto Israelites, and died at Amsterdam, 1687, in the Jewish faith. After having been immured a long time in the dungeons of the Inquisition, he was fortunate enough to effect his escape, and thereupon openly embraced the religion of his forefathers. The fortunes of this man are very remarkable and interesting. He was engaged in a public controversy with

him credit. He might be no more of a philosopher than his amicable antagonist Limborch. Which of the two is the best interpreter of scripture text, I shall not investigate now. But to me Orobio seems to have proceeded with the greater love of truth. One needs only read Limborch's Preface. It is not for the sake of inquiry that those gentlemen commence a controversy, but for the sake of each having it his own way.

I readily and most cordially concur in what you say of the morality of the New Testament. I fully believe that Jesus himself did not teach, by a good deal, what Christian Rabbins have been preaching in his name for so many ages; for the

Philip de Limborch, which the latter published under the title of "*Philipi a Limborch Amica Collatio cum Erudito Judæo*," reprinted at Basle, in 1740. There are still in the possession of the family, four manuscripts, which were never published, entitled: "*Obras del Doctor Yshac Orobio de Castro, alias Don Balthazar, Cathedratico de Metaphysica y Medicina en las Universidades de Alcala y Seville, Medico de la Camera del Duca di Medina Cœli de la familia di Borgogna, y del Rei Philippi quarto, Professor publico del Rei de Francia en la insigne Ciudad de Tolosa, y su consejero major.*" This long, splendid, and no doubt very lucrative *alias*, must have vanished, when Don Balthazar returned to Judaism; but "*nul ne peut être heureux s'il ne jouit de sa propre estime,*" says Jean Jacques Rousseau. A work of his translated into French by another Israelite, of the name of Henriquez, and published in London, in 1770, under the title of "*Israel vengé*," is very interesting, and fully justifies Mendelssohn's opinion of him.

sake of which they so frequently butchered people, and, now and then, were butchered themselves.

Christianity like yours, Sir, if universally adopted would transform our earth into a Paradise. And in so important a business, who would carp at a name? Shall the purest system of Ethics be called Christianity? Why not, if that answer any good purpose? But this Christianity is actually an invisible church consisting of Jews, Mahometans, and Chinese, in which Greeks and Romans must principally be counted. How strangely incongruent our opinions at times are! In history, the Greeks and Romans are objects of our admiration; and on a comparison with their virtues, we must think very meanly of ourselves. Yet, whenever the reward of virtue, or which is the same thing, salvation, is to be awarded compendiously, Pagans either are not thought of at all, or contumeliously turned away.

I was somewhat surprised at your question: why do I not seek to make proselytes? The duty of converting evidently results from the principle, that out of the pale of the converter's church no salvation is to be expected. Since I, as a Jew, am not bound to adopt that position, as according to the doctrine of the Rabbins, it is possible that the just and virtuous of every nation, shall enjoy



eternal felicity hereafter, the reason for proselyting falls to the ground, nay, I am to forbear openly oppugning a religion that has its good sides. "La religion," say you, "est la culte du Dieu." So it is. But every one knows that there is *internal* as well as *external* religion, between which a careful distinction must be made. The internal religion of the Jews contains no other precepts than those of the religion of Nature. These we are by all means bound to propagate, and I endeavour to discharge that duty so much as is in my power: not to acknowledge it would be the height of uncharitableness; although it also has its limits, and admits of modification.

Our external religion, on the contrary, was never designed to be propagated, for its precepts are confined to a particular race, as well as to times and circumstances. We certainly think ours the best of all religions, because we believe it to be divine; but it does not hence follow that it is absolutely the best. It is the best for us, and for our posterity; the best for certain times, under certain circumstances, and with certain limitations. What external religion may be best for other nations, perhaps God has announced to them likewise through prophets, or he has left it to their own judgment to decide the question. I do not know how that may be; and cannot say anything positive

about it. But this I know, that no external religion can be universal ; and that by making proselytës, I am extending the religion of my forefathers, beyond the boundaries originally prescribed to it.

Finally, I know that I sincerely love all friends of wisdom and virtue, and that I esteem you, Sir, with all my heart, believing you to be really, what you appear to me in your letter.

MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

**MOSES MENDELSSOHN'S REPLY**

**TO**

**CHARLES BONNET.**



## REPLY TO CHARLES BONNET.

### INTRODUCTION.

THE following letter has, so far as I know, never been printed in full, and, therefore, did not become known to the public. It may prove acceptable even to the learned, as it completes the history of Lavater's over-zealousness ; and stamps our philosopher's character with another mark of love of truth. Bonnet was not privy to Lavater's intention, or, probably, would have disapproved of it. In his reply to the latter, Mendelssohn, advertng to Bonnet's "Evidences of the Christian Religion," says, that, 1st, most of that author's philosophical hypotheses are of German growth, 2nd, his general observations are not the most profound part of his work ; and 3rd, the greatest part of his conclusions follow so loosely from the



premises, that I myself would undertake to vindicate, by the same reasonings, any religion whatsoever." Those assertions, particularly the last, somewhat nettled the Geneva philosopher, and it is supposed, betrayed him into a sharpish letter to Mendelssohn, which, however, was not found amongst his papers, but had elicited from him the following answer. Perhaps it contains no illustration, which he did not develop more masterly, more perspicuously, and forcibly in subsequent writings, particularly in his copious "Jerusalem." Still, it may throw a stronger light on some subjects, for which there was no opportunity in those works; and, on that account, it may not be without some interest to the "curious" reader, were it even for mere completeness' sake. The learned, in this respect, resemble the connoisseurs in art, who admit into their collections, first ideas, sketches, and proofs, although they are in possession of the artist's finished performance. Nor will the antiquary despise an inferior coin which owes its existence to some memorable event, because the medallist has, at a later period, executed a more elegant and more elaborate piece on the same subject. In the present case, the main requisites are genuineness and contemporaneousness. Both can be warranted, if a guarantee be at all necessary. For my co-religionaries, to whom this

letter is especially dedicated, it contains very important ideas, offering ample matter for reflection. And it would be a sad thought, indeed, that the rising generation should no longer find pleasure or interest in such enquiries.

DAVID FRIEDLANDER.

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*Sir,*

THE wise moderation with which you express yourself in your letter of the 12th instant, on the unpleasant feelings given you by the occurrence between Mr. Lavater and myself, deeply affected me. It is singular that three good-natured beings, sincerely wishing well to each other, should, without any intention in the world, prove a source of mutual vexation! What made me more ashamed than anything, is, that throughout the whole affair, you were the only one who had nothing to reproach himself with.

The Zurich Deacon has as good as acknowledged his rashness. Nor did I, myself remain quite free from indiscreetness. The mental excitation, in consequence of his challenge, made me express myself about you, with less reserve than is due to your merits, and than ought to have accompanied the consciousness of my own in-

feriority. I saw the case in a light different from that in which it appears to me now. The translator, thought I, would hardly have made that extraordinary step, without consulting the author of the original; the challenge must, therefore, have been sanctioned by the writer of "Palinogenesy." And, now, judge yourself what conclusions might not be drawn from such a misapprehension. I let some months go by, in order to see whether a hint of the excellent "Palingenesist" would set me to rights; and not until the end of December was I informed by Mr. Lavater himself that you had disapproved of his dedicatory epistle. But then my letter to him was published, and already ten days on the road to Zurich.

Forgive, wise philanthropist, both the Zurich Deacon, and the Berlin Jew, the unpleasantness they inadvertently caused you, and consign the past to oblivion.

It is unbecoming every one of us, openly to defy one another, and thereby furnish diversion to the idle, scandal to the simple, and malicious exultation to the revilers of truth and virtue. Were we to analyse our aggregate stock of knowledge, we certainly shall concur in so many important truths, that, I venture to say, even few individuals of one and the same religious per-

suasion, would more harmonize in thinking. A point here and there, on which, perhaps, we shall still divide, might be adjourned for some ages longer, without any detriment to the welfare of the human race. The truths which we jointly admit, have not yet spread so widely, that we may expect any material benefit will arise to the good cause, from the final decision of those debateable questions. But the denominations of "Christianity," and "Judaism," are associated with them. Well, and what does that signify? To our ears they sound not a whit more inimical than the denominations of "Cartesian," or "Leibnitzian." What a world of bliss we should live in, did all men adopt and practise the true principles, which the best amongst the Christians and the best amongst the Jews have in common! You will easily imagine, that with such sentiments, my talents, as a polemic, cannot be of the first order; nor do you, Sir, seem, any more than myself, gifted by nature for that occupation. Your mildness and, if I may be allowed the expression, your almost excessive modesty, disqualify you for the part of a theological prize-fighter. I think the Zurich deacon too much of a lover of truth, that he would not copy your example in this; and then the business between you and me would soon be

settled ; not, though, without being of inestimable consequence to myself, as thereby I became acquainted and got into correspondence with one of the most celebrated philosophers of the age.

My never-to-be-forgotten friend *Abbt*, he who first mentioned my name to you, possessed a small portion of the same quality, for which you find fault with Mr. Lavater, a quality, nevertheless, commendable in a young man of great hopes, provided it be kept within due bounds. Full of enthusiasm for every thing good and beautiful, he extolled, with his whole heart, the least trace of it ; without considering that praise answers the less good, and is also the less pleasing, the more unqualified it is bestowed. His preface to my “*Letters on Sensation*,”\* which he translated into French under your superintendance, afford a proof of this. While, on the contrary, the high idea of both your character and judgment, which he gave me in his friendly correspondence, was fully confirmed by the *Considérations sur les Corps organisées*, which appeared at the time. And I have ever since studied your works with profit and pleasure.

Supposing your “*Enquiry*” intended for a refutation of other religions, I could not find it either

\* *Brieffe ueber die Empfindungen.*

profound or philosophic. Indeed, the positions which you attribute to Christianity, one may believe in, and still be a Jew or a Mahometan. All the dogmas peculiar to that religion, and which distinguish it from all others, even from the religion of Nature, you designedly pass over in silence, and, as you yourself state, from the most charitable motive in the world, namely—*not to give offence to any sect*. This made me, in some measure, divine the true object of your “Apology;” and, accordingly, I signified as much in my letter to Mr. Lavater. But the unlucky dedication having once displaced the right point of view, I was, justly enough, surprised at finding myself opposed by dogmas, which must be admitted by *every* religion, and which do not distinguish Christianity even from the religion of savages, if they have one. On this consideration, every apology which goes into the dogmas peculiar to Christianity, and seeks to make them consistent with reason, must have appeared to me more profound, and more philosophical than yours. We Germans possess, besides the theological works of the great *Leibnitz*, in which the most subtle metaphysics are employed in defence of Christianity, many of those apologies, of which I shall mention only those by *Canz*, *Baumgarten*, and *Sack*. But

in the light in which I see your work now, namely—as being, as you yourself allege, calculated for putting better thoughts into the heads of the unbelievers of your own church, who with false philosophy would controvert the principles of their faith—I cannot but retract my opinion.

As to what remains, you do me no more than justice in admitting that, by saying, *most of the author's philosophical hypotheses are of German growth*, I did not mean to accuse you of plagiarism. The mere idea that my words might be thus misconstrued, would have appeared to me highly fantastical, had I not, the other day, casually read in a German Literary Gazette, that such an illiberal imputation has actually been thrown out against you by some one else. I think, in metaphysical matters, one cannot be too cautious in insinuating things of that kind. Perhaps it is not saying too much, that no new discoveries have been made in that science for some ages past. The for and against of all points, any way worth investigating, have been so frequently argued, that he who wants to start something quite novel, must almost come out with something quite absurd. Nay, according to the complaints of a philosopher of antiquity, absurdity seems to have been already, in his time, exhausted by

philosophers of an older date. Where have *Leibnitz's* opinions and hypotheses not been detected, or pretended to have been detected? He, himself, seldom maintained a position, without ascribing it (perhaps from too great a modesty) to some ancient or other. I, for my own part, can point out, in several passages of *Maimonides*, in express words, the hypothesis of *preordained miracles*; and in ancient cabalistical writers, whom, most probably, you do not know even by name, that of a subtle, organised, and ethereal tabernacle, enclosed in this, our clay body, and being the proper seat of the soul. The latter call that substance *Ruach*, "Spirit," in contradistinction of *Neshamāh*, "Soul," and say the Spirit is the vehicle of the soul, &c. &c. But as you very justly observe of yourself, that in metaphysics, the merit of invention cannot be denied to him who throws light on ideas, shows truth under a new aspect, brings it in connexion with other truths, and leads the human understanding on to the most subtle speculations; nothing was wider from my thoughts than an attempt to dispute you that merit; and I proposed to take the first opportunity to declare as much openly. All I meant (and so the context will show every intelligent reader), was to intimate to Mr. Lavater, that the philosophical principles, which he wants to



recommend to me for my conversion, are not new to a *German*; that subsequent to *Leibnitz*, all the *Monadists*, and particularly those I named above, arrived by argute reasoning, whither the *Palingenesist* conducts one by the road of observation; and that, as a German, I had read the authors of my nation. With that, I little thought of the odious reflection you mention; and, consequently, saw no necessity for providing against it, or disavowing it.

I have yet to render explanation about that passage in my letter, at which you were so much surprised. I said, "Nor are, in my opinion, the general observations, premised by the author, the profoundest part of the work; at least the use and application he makes of them, for the vindication of his religion, appears to me so inadmissible and gratuitous, that I scarcely recognise *Bonnet* in it." You seemed to believe that I looked upon the modesty, with which you lay the result of your speculations before the reader, as a sign of want of confidence. I go on—"The greatest part of his *Consequents* flow so loosely from the *Antecedents*, that I venture to vindicate, by the same reasoning, any religion whatsoever." On that, you ask, would I undertake to defend with the same arguments, the system of *Mahomet* or *Confucius*? Might

I not, for proving the legation of Moses, and the divineness of his laws, be in possession of different arguments than those made use of by yourself on behalf of Christianity? You will pardon me for being somewhat large in answering those questions. Consistent with the frankness you expect of me, I must tell you that in your work, I was not mistaken in the Socratic modesty, which, accompanied by firm internal conviction, bears the external appearance of diffidence; and that it was in regard to the substance, much more than of the form of your arguments, that I pronounced them inadmissable and gratuitous.

So far as every revelation supposes an historical fact, the truth of that revelation can be substantiated no otherwise than by *Tradition*, *Testimonies* and *Monuments*. There we agree. But you, Sir, with other apologists of Christianity, receive miracles as an infallable criterion of truth, and believe that when there appears to be credible evidence of a prophet's having performed miracles, there can be no longer any doubt of the divineness of his mission; whence you demonstrate, indeed, by very sound logic, that there is nothing impossible in miracles; and that the testimony of miracles may also deserve belief. It was of that argument that I said, one may defend with it any religion one pleases. Do you think, Sir, that we

(I am speaking of my own brethren in the faith) can produce no testimonies of amazing miracles wrought by extraordinary men of our nation, long after the times of Jesus of Nazareth? And those testimonies are held, at least by us, as authentic and venerable as you hold yours. Here, then, there are testimonies against testimonies!

In Poland, on the borders of *Ukraine*, a Jewish sect, persecuted by my co-religionaries themselves, pretended to have wrought miracles only very lately; and I am acquainted with respectable men, and for what I know, men of veracity, who have confirmed those miracles from ocular demonstration. The very adversaries and persecutors of the sect admit the fact; but, as usual, attribute it to sorcery. All this is in print, black on white, not by the sect itself (for I, at least, have not seen any work of theirs), but by those enemies themselves who denounce them as enticers and sorcerers. The accusers have never been refuted by any one; and when our posterity come to read those works, they must take the thing for granted, and, if miracles are at all to be trusted, conclude from it I scarcely know what.<sup>1</sup>

At Paris, enlightened Paris, as both yourself, and your translator observe with astonishment, extraordinary things of that sort are said now to

take place daily, which, if we believe the reports, can be nothing else but miracles. The truth of those circumstances has already been confirmed and attested, under the signature and seal of whole benches of Magistrates ; not to speak of a host of witnesses, whose depositions no court will discredit. What shall we advance against that religious party ?\* Shall we say all their witnesses are either impostors or dupes. What right have we to say so ? You argue, in your inquiry, that those pretended miracles deserve no credit, because it is evidently not consistent with the attributes of the Supreme being, to disturb the order of nature for the sake of so futile a thing as, whether or not certain theses are contained in a certain book. Pardon me ; but I do not discover there that strict justice, which, in all other respects, the *Palingenesist* is wont to deny not even his opponents. Might not a disciple of *Jansenius* say : Remember that those miracles, if admitted, will at once operate as indirect proofs of the truth of the Roman church ; and that we should thereby be enabled to refute, on evidence beyond all contradiction and objection, every other sect and opinion of mankind. And can this prospect possibly be a matter of indifference to you ? Is

\* The Abbé Paris.

it unbecoming the Supreme being to renew, in these times of infidelity, the miracles whereby he was pleased, heretofore, to plant faith? Is it incompatible with his attributes, to reclaim, by the undeniable evidence of the senses, the libertine who will not believe unless he see, or those who otherwise got astray through an abuse of reason? But if Sovereign wisdom may see the expediency of letting miracles take place, it, most probably, will select for that purpose, the religious sect which comes nearest to truth, even in secondary matters. For although the particular circumstance which distinguishes one sect from another, be not very material of itself, we should remember that it is certainly not consistent with the wisdom of God, to support an untruth, whether of great or small importance. If, therefore, it will permit miracles for any end best known to itself, it cannot let them happen any where but amongst that sect, which has truth on its side in every thing.

Both in the Old and New Testament we read of miracles taking place on trivial occasions; still the object ultimately to be attained by them, always was great, and worthy of the Supreme Being. In the same manner, God may suffer miracles to be wrought, in our days, in order to confirm an unimportant doctrine, if you please; but at any rate, immediately to bring back into the

bosom of the church, infidels, heretics, &c. I therefore ask again, what argument can we make use of with those people, so long as we ourselves are disposed to build our creed on miracles, or even on the tradition of miracles?

Would I undertake to defend the system of Mahomet or Confucius with the same reasoning? I do not know that Confucius ever pretended to have wrought miracles; nor does his moral doctrine require any vindication that I can offer. But as Mahomet condescended—as he expressed himself—to work miracles, and the Mussulmen are propagating the testimony thereof, by traditions and monuments, how can we refute them? If we attempt to cast suspicion either on their original testimonies, or on the propagation of them, is not the way of retortion open to them? In this case, our own impartiality is hardly to be depended upon; for how can we pretend that others shall recognize us as judges, while we ourselves are a party concerned? The Jewish, Christian and Mahometan miracles oppose one another. In every religion itself, the miracles boasted of by the different sects of each, oppose one another. By what criterions are we to distinguish truth from error, in a matter of such importance?

On the other hand, I find that in the times of the ancient faith, miracles were not held an

infallible proof of the divineness of a prophet's mission. False prophets too are said to have been able to work miracles; whether by sorcery, by arts then but very partially known, or by abusing of extraordinary talents and faculties, bestowed on them for a less unworthy purpose, I will not take upon myself to decide. Suffice it that the abilities of working miracles was never considered an unerring criterion of truth. The lawgiver of the Jews delivers his sentiments on this in very plain terms, Deut. xiii. 2. and Jesus of Nazareth speaks no less plainly, and if anything still more emphatically, of the fallibility of miracles, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders," Mat. xxiv. 24. Then, as those two lawgivers have declared that even false prophets may work miracles, I do not see how the followers or advocates of either, can act so directly against the words of scripture, as to pronounce miracles an unerring test of tradition.

The Mosaic legation forms quite a different case; it is an embassy not vouched for solely by miracles: (for I say again, miracles at times are not to be depended upon, and so says Moses himself); but, it rests on a much safer foundation. The entire mass of the people to whom the mission was directed, beheld the divine manifestation with their

own eyes, and heard with their own ears, that God had appointed Moses his nuncio and herald. The Israelites, therefore, were all and every one of them, eye and ear-witnesses of the prophet's exalted commission, and required no further proof or testimony. Accordingly it is written: *Exod. xix. 9.* "And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo! I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak unto thee, and believe thee for ever;" and *Exod. xiii. 12.* "And this shall be a token unto thee. When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain."

The openly giving of the law, was therefore the strongest proof of the legation of Moses, whereby all doubts and uncertainty, which miracles alone could not remove, were rendered impossible. Moses certainly wrought very great miracles, but not until after the giving of the law, and never as a proof of the authenticity of his mission; but only when circumstances, and the exigencies of the nation rendered them expedient. Whenever he reproved the people for their want of faith, he always referred them to the divine manifestation, rather than to his own prodigious exploits.

The Israelites, it is true, are further directed by the Lord, through Moses, to hearken to a prophet working miracles, if he announce to them the



divine commands. But according to our religious system this is only a *positive* law, the same as that which directs us to finally judge in law cases, after the evidence of two witnesses. The evidence of two witnesses is not therefore infallible, nor yet is the evidence of miracles; but a positive law must speak definitively, and limit our doubts in order that, whenever an instance of the same kind occurs, we may have a standing rule to go by, a rule not left to every one's discretion, but unalterably fixed by the law. Agreeable to our religious doctrine, belief from miracles is founded on the law only, and not on the nature of the conviction; therefore whoever appeals to miracles, must state as his ground, the law which enjoins that belief. But when it is attempted to force upon us by reasoning, miracles as a criterion of truth; when from an illimited faith in the evidence of miracles, it is even proposed to annul our law, and substitute a new one for it; we justly relapse into disbelief; compare together the miracles, which so many nations and religions are boasting of;—array all the rest against each of them respectively, and—admit none.

These were nearly my thoughts, when I declared I would undertake the defence of any, and all religions, by one and the same reasoning. You will perceive, that those words are, in an equal measure,

owing to the light in which your translator caused me to see the original. I can therefore never make use of them again, except perhaps in a defence against Mr. Lavater, should that become unavoidable. However, when I shall have received the copy of *Palingenesy*, with which you are favoring me, I shall instantly read it a second time, in the original idiom, when either the translator's dedicatory epistle, nor yet his comments, will put me out of the proper point of view. And supposing we should in the end, not coincide in some observations occurring in your enquiry, I too well know, from other productions, your not-to-be-mistaken merits, ever to cease being your admirer.

In conclusion, I heartily accept your tender of friendship; it is the most precious gift that could be bestowed on me; and I dare not express, without fearing to offend your modesty, how much I feel obliged to you for it. Having cordially forgiven Mr. Lavater the vexation he caused me, I ought now to be exceedingly thankful to him: for it is through his enthusiasm that I enjoy the happiness of calling myself the friend of Bonnet. I shall endeavour to render myself more and more worthy of that title; and there is nothing I so much wish for, as an opportunity to prove the perfect regard and devotion, with which &c.

MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

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**ADDENDA.**



## ADDENDA.

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### NOTES TO MENDELSSOHN'S PREFACE.

#### *Note 1.*

AN article in "The Hessian Contributions to Literature and the Arts," 1785, first part, entitled "The Civil Improvement of the Jews," has the following passage :—"As regards his creed, let him continue a Jew ; let him have his boys circumcised ; let him firmly adhere to his notion of the unity of God ; and as firmly rely on the coming of a Messiah. The latter opinion, in particular, no more disqualifies him for the offices and benefits of civil society, than any Portuguese forfeits his right of citizenship, because, in his pious simplicity, he is, to this day, expecting the return of *Don Sebastian*."

It is worth remarking, that while the Jews were most furiously driven out of France, in 1180, under Philip II ; in 1253, under Lewis IX,

called the Saint; in 1307, under Philip IV, called the Fair; and in 1318, under Philip V; they were constantly tolerated in the very heart of the kingdom, namely—in the county of *Avignon*; for that territory then belonged to the Popes. Nor is it less singular, that while Christian sovereigns, from perverted religious zeal, but in most cases from rapaciousness, persecuted and massacred them, or expelled them from their dominions, the Popes, as the heads of Christianity, indeed, highly commended the princes for their pious sentiments, as the barbarous persecution of unoffending subjects was then called, but themselves, taking advantage of those both morally and politically wrong measures, admitted the Jews, powerfully and mildly protecting them.

Thus in 1040, Pope Alexander II, protected the Jews in Spain against Ferdinand I.\* And when, in 1492, Ferdinand V. drove them out of that kingdom and all his other dominions, with horrible cruelty, Pope Alexander VI.† conferred upon him the title of *Catholic*; but he himself received 15,000 of these unfortunates at Rome. “Il se moquoit,” Basnage very justly observes,

\* Basnage Histoire des Juifs. Lib. 7. Cap. 5. p. 1530.

† Limborch, Historia Inquisitionis L. 1. c. 24. Basnage l. c. p. 1874. דון יצחק אברבנאל בהקדמתו למלכים Abarbanel in his preface to Kings.

“secretement de la folie d’ un politique raffiné, qui depeuploit ses états d’ un nombre considérable d’ habitans riches et habile au commerce ; pendant qu’il donnoit de grands éloges à sa piété.” “He (the Pope) secretly laughed at the folly of a refined statesman, who depopulated his states of a considerable number of opulent subjects, clever at commerce, while openly he bestowed on him high praise for his piety.” In the great general persecution of the Jews all over Europe, in 1348 and 1349, Pope Clement VI. only powerfully preserved the Avignon Jews from it.\* Pope Innocent XII. even lent the Roman Jews 100,000 Scudi at 3 per cent interest, to enable them to pay their debts.†

The first bull issued by Alexander II., was for abolishing the practice of compelling Jews to embrace Christianity.‡

Pope John XX. being expostulated with by his own sister *Sangijssa*, that as Christ’s vice-regent, he ought not to tolerate Jews in his dominions, replied : O stuporum Mulieris ! Quibus salvator ipse pepercit et ut oculi sui pupillam tangui vetuit,

\* *Trithemius* in *Chronic.* Hirsang. Tom. 2. f. 207 : Solus Papa Clemens VI. Judæos in Avenione habitantes, al hac interneione potenter servavit ; also שבת יהודה סימן יד דף קכג.

† *Theatr. Europ.* Tom. xv. f. 5056.

‡ *Palatinus, De Rebus Gestis Pontifice*, Vol. II. Col. 347.



iis non parcamus? Sed nempe Mulier, colo suæ affixa, hæc alta et sublima non capit.\*

“O for a foolish woman! Ought we not to spare them whom the Saviour himself spared, and whom he forbade us to injure no more than his eyeball? But a woman, in her place at the spinning wheel only, comprehendeth not those high and sublime things.”

Under Pope Alexander III., in 1161, a certain *Rabbi Iachiel*, is said to have been steward of all the domains, and also major domo—the latter, an office of great importance.†

And many Canonists are of opinion that **Jews** may fill offices even at the Papal Court. The Roman Canonist *Vincent*, theologian and missionary, says: “Cosa mirabile dicono i dottori che stante lo statuto, che niuno sia eletto ad offici, che non sia divoto alla santa romana chiesa, i Giudei, in virtù di tale statuto, non vengono esclusi de quegli offici, perchè possono dirsi, fideli e divoti della santa romana chiesa se pacificamente conversano et vivano fra noi.” “The teachers hold forth a singular thing, namely—notwithstanding the existence of a decree that no one shall be eligible to an office who is not devoted to the holy Roman church, Jews are not excluded from offices in virtue of the said decree; because

\* Basnage. Liv. 7. § 6. p. 1798.

† Wagenseilii Pera Juvenilis. Tom. 2. L. 2. c. a. p. 129.

they may be called faithful and devoted to the Roman church, as long as they keep commerce with, and live peaceably amongst us.”\* The learned Papal Jurisconsult *de Sufanis*, is of that same opinion, when he says: “Judæi dicuntur seu dici possunt, fideles et devoti sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ”—“the Jews are, or may be called, faithful and devoted to the holy Roman church.”†

Barios, a Portuguese Jew, therefore justly observes: “La pontificia Roma siempre los ha patrocinado, des de que destruyo a Jerusalem su General Tito.”—“Papal Rome always protected them (the Jews), after Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus the Roman General.‡”

I take this opportunity to describe the ceremony of the Roman Jews doing homage to a newly-elected Pope.

The first time a newly-elected Pope proceeded to the Lateran church, the Jews resident at Rome, met him at Mount Jordanus, fell down on their knees, and handed to him the law of Moses, at the same time beseeching him for protection and grace. The Pope then gave them the following answer in the Latin Language, after a set form: “Dear

\* Giovanni Maria Vincent: *Il Messia venuto* p. 7.

† Marquardus de Infanis: *De Judæis et Usuris*. Francofort, 1613. in 8. P. 2. c. 2. N. 2. p. 180.

‡ Barrios *Historia Universali Judaica*, p. 13.

Hebrews! we praise and revere the holy law, as it was transmitted to your ancestors from Almighty God, by the hand of Moses : whereas we censure and condemn both your foolish interpretation of the same, and your ritual laws, inasmuch as the apostolic faith teacheth that the Messiah whom ye are still expecting, has come long since ; for this faith was preached by Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, who lives and reigns a God along with the Father and the Holy Ghost, to all eternity."\* When Innocent II. fled to France, and in the year 1246 entered Paris in state, the Jews living there went to meet him with the Rolls of the Law, as their highest patron and protector. And the Pope indeed, gave them a gracious reception, saying amongst others : " O that God would remove the veil† which prevents your seeing what this law contains."‡ The account which an ancient tourist gives of the ceremony which the Jews of Rome observed at the installation of Pope Innocent XII. in the year 1692, is also interesting. When they handed over to him the

\* Hoornbeekii Summarium Controversarium cum Judæis, lib. ii. p. 67 ; Mayeri Commentatio de electione Pontificum Romanorum, c. viii, p. 218 ; Wagenseilii Pera Juvenilis. Tom. ii. cap. i. p. 130.

† Basnage, Histoire des Juifs, lib. vii. cap. x. §. 2. p. 1645.

‡ Courieuse und vollständige Reisz — Beschreibung von ganz Italien. Erster Theil, 14ter Brief, §. 306. &c.

Pentateuch, he said; “*Legge buona; ma popolo maledetto.*”—“A good law, but an execrable nation!” On occasion of the Jews’ proposing to present a petition to Urbanus VIII, he issued the following regulation, which Popes were to observe ever after on admitting Jews in their presence. Such audience is given in the antichamber only; and when the Jew is going to kiss his slipper, the Pope draws back his foot, and the Jew must do that homage to the spot of ground on which the foot had been resting.\* The petitioner is allowed to speak only in an humble posture, with his head inclined, and his eyes cast down. Urbanus VIII. according to his own declaration, ordered this ceremony: “*non a libris instructus, non a magistro rituum monitus, sed cœlitus illuminatus*”—not as taught by books, or advised by the master of the ceremonies, but in consequence of an inspiration from above!†

An instance of singular toleration, as well as a proof of the great power of gold, was given by Ferdinand, king of Castile, who once sold the

\* This is by no means done as a humiliation, but merely on account of the cross which is embroidered on the Pope’s slippers. Schudt, *jüdische Merkwürdigkeiten*. 3 Th. p. 159.

† Matth. Zimmermann *Flori Legium Philologico Historicum*. Pars. ii. p. 430.

bishopric of Tarentum for 13,000 ducats to a Jew, for his son, who had become a Christian.\*

Martin Luther, whom surely no one will charge with partiality to the Jews, says: "I think if the Jews were kindly used and properly instructed in holy writ, many of them would become good Christians, and return to their Fathers, Prophets, and Patriarchs, from whom they grow more and more estranged, by being constantly insulted, treated with superciliousness and contempt, and absolutely not suffered to be anything! If the apostles, who were Jews themselves every one of them, had behaved towards us Gentiles as we Gentiles behave towards the Jews, not one Gentile would have become a Christian. Then, as the Jewish apostles acted brotherly by us, it behoves us to act brotherly by the Jews. Whereas worrying them, as we do, and imputing to them this and that, and heaven knows what, how can we ever expect to do any good with them?" This is language worthy of the great reformer. There are passages in his writings, it is true, where he speaks quite differently of the Jews. But men

\* Christoph. Besoldus in *Sevile et succincta Narratione rerum a regibus Hierosolymorum, Neapoleos, Siciliaque gestarum ex variorum Historicorum collatione representata*. Argentorali, 1636, in 8. c. viii. v. 9. p. 1153. ff.

ever so free from prejudice and superstition, do not in *all* matters, soar above the age they live in; nor is it in their power to obliterate youthful impressions.

The question,—whether nursery-maids and governesses have not contributed more towards the prejudices against the Jews, than all the Fathers of the Church together, is not quite so foolish a one, as it may be imagined.

*Note2.*

In the Appendix to the Memoirs of Moses Mendelssohn, (*Longman and Co.*), will be found a few brief notices about the famous Wolfenbüttle Fragments. An anecdote of the editor of them, will not be in the wrong place here.

The Vienna Diary of 23rd Nov. 1779, contains the following article.

“Lessing, whose talents are too well known and appreciated to need praise from the feeble pen of a journalist, has been presented by the Amsterdam Jews with a purse of 1,000 ducats, in consequence of certain “Fragments” published by him. Events of that kind deserve to be publicly noticed, not only because they offer a convincing proof that great genius will, at all times, and every where, excite sensation, but also as a stimulus to others.”

The article either must have been borrowed of



some foreign journal or other, or was without any particularly sinister design forged by some mischievous wag, who probably knew nothing about the nature and tendency of the Fragments in question. However, on the 27th of the same month, the Diary again states.

“In our last number, we stated that Lessing, &c.—The report was perfectly correct. But having been assured since, by an individual even more credible than he of whom we had the original account, that the said Fragments very much scandalize the Christian religion, and that Lessing has been severely reprimanded on account of the publication, we herewith formally retract whatever we may have said in his praise. The more, as productions impugning the sanctity of religion, though boasting ever so much of the blandishments of learning, are not only undeserving of applause, but in the highest degree blamable.”

At first, Lessing wanted his step-son who then resided at Vienna, to contradict that fabulous trash in the same paper that broached it. But the receptacle of falsity, although ready to propagate the defamation of a great man, could afford no room for his vindication. He then proposed to have an extra sheet published, for that specific purpose; the Vienna censorship however was too

much on the alert for him. Despite of the Vienna censorship, it was at length published at Ratisbon, and headed: "An Exact Statement about the Story of the Thousand Ducats, or Judas Iscariot the Second. Nov. 1779;" of which, some hundreds of copies were smuggled into Vienna, in order that Lessing's friends as well as an impartial public, might have an opportunity of judging for themselves.

If there was any design at all in inventing and publishing that romance, it would have been noother than that of a humorous experiment on Austrian gullibility. As if the Jews do not know how to employ their ducats in a more profitable way than by writing down the Christian or any other religion! That it was got up on purpose to humiliate or vilify Lessing cannot well be imagined; yet he replied to the hoax with a degree of seriousness, far from what things of that kind deserve.

*From the Life of Lessing, by his Brother.*

*Note 3.*

"The State," said Frederick II., "leaves every one at liberty to gain heaven, after his own fashion; if he be but a good citizen on earth."

*Note 4.*

"Nay, I venture to set down as a commendable



certain Hery Jersey even wrote a pamphlet under the title of "On the Union of the Jews and the Christians."\*

The high esteem in which Rabbi Manasseh, a man of no less profound than enlightened mind, was held by learned Christian contemporaries, appears from the frequent honorable mention the most eminent Literati made of him, which did no less honour to themselves. Johannes Beverovicus† calls him, "Vir natalibus et doctrinæ nobilissimus,"—noble both by birth and by learning. D. J. Fæchtius designates him as "Celebratissimus Latinis scriptis Rabinus,"—a Rabbi celebrated for his Latin works. Dillhern‡ extols his modesty as the stamp of true merit, and rare amongst the learned of his nation. How very beautifully Barlæus sings of him!§

*Note 6.*

For no other reason but because we are Jews.

\* Carol. Memor. Eccles. T. ii. p. 1. lib. vi, cap. v. p. 17.

† In the Appendix to his work, "De Terminæ Vitæ."

‡ Caroli I. c. Tom. cap. lxx. p. 225.

§ Epigramma in Problemata clarissimi Viri Manassis Ben Israel: De Creatione. How liberal-minded the concluding verse!

Si sapiamus diversa, Deo vivamus amici,

Doctaque mens precio constet ubique suo.

Hæc fidei vox summa meæ est. Hæc crede *Manasse*,

Sic ego *Christiades*, sic eris *Abramides*.

Have such Christians (happily, all are not so) forgotten the times, in which, as Tertullian tells us, the Pagans used to say : “ Bonus vir Caius Sejus, sed malus tantum quod Christianus est,” i. e. “Cajus Sejus, it is true, is a good man, but just as worthless a one, for being a Christian.”—*Tertul. Apol. adv. Gentes pro Christ*, cap. 3.

To exemplify the above quotation by kindred feelings, we shall have to take only a short walk back to the middle of the last century. That which is now done daily and hourly was then considered a dereliction, and source of scandal. The breach between Jews and Christians was still so wide, that the most estimable and liberal Berlin clergymen felt shy of holding personal intercourse with Mendelssohn. They indeed highly respected one another; but meet they seldom did, and then as it were by stealth. At present this will appear incredible; but it is true enough.

*Note 7.*

Jost. L. c. Vol. viii. p. 214.

*Note 8.*

*Abzugsgelder; Abschosz.* A tax paid by him who removes with his property to another jurisdiction, a tax tyrannical enough as it is, but most abominable when people are driven out of a

country, against their will. *Quod non mortale pectora cogit, auri sacra fames!*

*Note 9.*

Jean Calas's fate is too well known to require being retold. Not so Waser's. The son of a baker at Zurich, and possessed of good natural talents, he was intended for the pulpit, but made also physic and mathematics his study. He obtained in early life the living of Kreutz, but having fallen out with his vestry at an audit of the Poor fund, they lodged complaints against him with the council of Zurich: though they are said not to have been sufficiently founded, still he was dismissed; which bred in him a fierce hatred of the government of his Canton. Thereupon he took up his residence at his native town, subsisting on his wife's fortune, and, when that became exhausted, on the produce of his literary labours. His passion for politics, and perhaps making himself too busy in public affairs, rendered him obnoxious to many of his fellow-citizens: yet being a man of considerable abilities, there were some patri-cians who would occasionally employ him in diplomatic missions. It seems, however, that the implacable grudge which he bore his country, led him to neglect rather than promote its interest; of which several instances were laid to his charge.

About that time, Zurich was the scene of a singular occurrence. A great number of people were taken seriously ill soon after having been to the sacrament, owing, as was conjectured, to some deleterious ingredient having been mixed up with the wine used on that occasion; which flagitious act was imputed to Waser, but could never be brought home to him. In the sequel, he attempted to embezzle a most important state paper, which he had borrowed of the keeper of the archives, ostensibly for a literary purpose. For this, and also for having divulged, in foreign periodicals, secrets relative to the affairs of Switzerland, he was apprehended and put into prison; to escape from which he made a desperate attempt, but did not succeed. After a lontrial, he was found guilty of high treason by a very small majority, and sentenced to be beheaded; which sentence he underwent with great fortitude, the 27th of May, 1780. He was the author of a valuable treatise on Diplomacy; and he furnished also a very clever translation of Lucian's works from the Greek.

*Note 10.*

The remarkable will of the wealthy Portuguese Jew Pinedo, formerly residing at Amsterdam, as printed in "*Schudtii Memorabilia Judaica*," lib. iv. cap. 18, runs as follows: viz.

1st. I bequeath to the city of Amsterdam, after my demise, five hundred thousand guilders (£41,500).

2nd. I lend the same, one million and a half guilders, ten years, without interest.

3rd. I make a present of ten thousand guilders to every Christian church at Amsterdam, and the Hague; and to South church,\* twenty thousand guilders.

4th. To every Christian asylum for orphans in both towns, I make a present of fifteen thousand guilders.

5th. To the poor, forty shiploads of turf.

6th. To the first orphan that shall regularly leave the orphan-house, one thousand guilders, and to the next, five hundred.

7th. I bequeath to the Portuguese synagogue at Amsterdam two hundred and fifty thousand guilders.

8th. To the Portuguese asylum for orphans, thirty thousand guilders.

9th. I lend government one million of guilders, at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum, on condition that the interest shall be appropriated to the Jews

\* There are four principal churches at Amsterdam, called the East, West, North, and South churches. The latter is contiguous to what was formerly called the Jews' quarter or precinct.

dwelling at Jerusalem. The principal to belong to government in perpetuity.

10th. To the German synagogue at Amsterdam, I bequeath five thousand guilders. To my cousin Peter Ovis, I bequeath three millions one hundred thousand guilders, together with my dwelling-house in town, and my country-house. To my wife, one million of guilders; and to the rest of my relations, ten thousand guilders. To those of my neighbours who shall carry my body to the grave, one hundred ducats, and to every single man, one hundred guilders each. To the readers in the synagogues at Amsterdam and the Hague, one hundred and fifty guilders, and to the assistants in the same, seventy-five guilders each.



NOTES TO THE SEARCH FOR LIGHT AND RIGHT.

*Note 1.*

IN a report on the political condition of the Jews, laid before the national assembly of Holland, in 1796, previous to its taking their future destiny into consideration, it was demonstrated: 1st, that the very revolution, founded as it was, on the rights of man, demanded the immediate inclusion of the Jews in the civil union: 2nd, that the national assembly represented the Jews, the same as it did all the other citizens; and: 3rdly, that by ignoring any part soever of the population, it would vitiate its own legitimacy. That doctrine having been firmly established, the old and threadbare arguments against Jewish emancipation were marshalled into the field, but soon beaten out of it again. It is the practice of every wise state, observes the report, to receive aliens, who take upon themselves all civic duties;\* and

\* It is said in the Talmud, (Tract *Chetuboth*, fol. iii.) "When persecuted and exiled Israel departed from their native land, and were dispersed amongst all the nations on earth, the Lord made them swear that they would never seek to regain pos-



recognize them as citizens, without any regard to their former condition and relations. The dogma of the Messiah is itself no impediment; as may be satisfactorily seen in a treatise by the late David Friedrichsfeld,\* which proves that it is forbidden to use any efforts for accelerating the figurative kingdom of the Messiah, and that a malediction is entailed even on the calculators of its coming.†

session of Jerusalem by main force; that they would be good and trusty subjects to the governments under which they might happen to dwell, and never act in defiance of their laws. If ye keep your vow, said the Lord, it will be well with ye; but if you do not, I shall leave ye a prey to your oppressors, like the wild beasts of the forest. Thus, a serious threat is held out to every Israelite, against violating the laws of any country in which he may happen to live. Talmud, (Tract *Baba Bathra*, p. 54, 55) positively says: "The laws of a king who is not an Israelite are perfectly valid, and may not be disobeyed."

Maimonides, too, is very comprehensive on that subject, in Tract *Mathanah*, (Sect. 4. Max. 11-14) where, amongst other things, he says: "As to validity, there is not the least difference between the laws of an Israelite king and those of a non-Israelite one."

\* Remarks on Professor Van Swinden's Speech. Rotterdam, 1796.

† Jost. L. c. vol. ix. p. 119. Samuel Jerichinæ, a celebrated Talmudist, and eminent physician, of whom רש"י (R. Sal. Iarchi) remarks, he had four by-names given him, viz: 1, *Jerichinæ*, great Astronomer, from ירח Moon, and נאה beautiful. 2, שקוד *Shakod*, diligent Theologian. 3, ארי"ח *Arioch*, king; because his judgments, particularly in civil cases, were considered by the Babylonish Jews, as final and binding as

## Note 2.

One would suppose a critic, who borrows all his weapons from the Pentateuch, better versed in

those of the sovereign ; and 4, שָׁבוֹר מַלְכָּה, *Sabur malca*, which means nearly the same thing, namely—that he was as highly honoured as the Persian monarch himself. He lived towards the end of the fortieth century from the creation, and thus longer than 1,600 years ago. It was he who said אֵין בֵּין חַעוֹלָם לֵאמֹר שְׁעָבוֹר מַלְכוּת בִּלְבָד חֲזִיהָ לִימֹת חֲמִשִּׁיהָ. Maimonides says the same towards the end of *Hilchath Melachim* אֲמָרוּ חֲכָמִים אֵין בֵּין רִבּוֹ i. e. the just idea of a Messiah contains neither more nor less than that a time will come, when the delivery of the Jews from oppression and burdens will take place ; that is, when they will participate in the rights of man, like other civilized human beings.

This exposition, emanating from such competent judges, serves as a *Norma* for rendering different other passages in the Talmud ; and is, upon the whole, considered highly important. The greatest Jewish literati concur in this opinion ; amongst whom may be reckoned Maimonides, whose sentiments on this vital point, are most interesting to theologians. He says: אֵל יַעֲלֶה עַל הַלֵּב שְׁבִימֹת חֲמִשִּׁיהָ יִבְטֹל דְּבַר מִמֶּנְהוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, אִו יִחַי שׁוֹם חִידוּשׁ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית, אֵלֹא עוֹלָם כִּמְנַחְנוּ נֹחַג, וְזֶה שְׁנֵאמַר בִּישְׁעֵי, וְגַר זָאֵב עִם כְּבֶשׂ וְנִמְרָ עִם גְּדִי יִרְבֵּץ וְכו', מִשָּׁל וְחִידָה : עֲנִין חֹדֶר שִׁיתִּיו יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹשְׁבֵין לְבִטָּח וְכו', וְיִחְזְרוּ כָלֵם לְדַת הָאֱמֶת וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתוּ וְכו' : i. e. Let it not be thought, that in the days of the Messiah, any thing will be done away with in the system of the world, or that there will be any thing new in the creation ; but the world will continue on the same system as it always was. And as to what is said, (Isaiah xi. 6.) “the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, &c.” That is a simile and figure, the real meaning of which is, that the Jews shall dwell in peace and safety ; that they shall

that work than to put the Sabbath on a parallel with the rites of sacrifices. The former is one

all return to the true faith, and no longer hurt or destroy. (Yad Hachasaka, vol. iv. Tract, Kings, chap. xii.) The Jew, who, with Jerichinæ and Maimonides, can conceive the promised redemption of Israel, without the hyperbolic adjuncts of signs and prodigies, sylvan and marine monsters, &c. ; but simply as a period when his nation will be more humanely treated in the lands in which they dwell, less insulted, and put on an equality with the rest of the inhabitants; he, I say, who can conceive the ultimate and universal emancipation in this national and rational manner, must also know that a sudden and simultaneous complete civilization and refinement of the Jews is not within the range of possibility, particularly when their different habits and manners in different countries are considered. Even the ancient Talmudical authors were sensible of the futility of such an expectation. Accordingly, they declared that the deliverance of the Jews, i. e. their promotion to the rank of citizens, and respected beings, will, at some time or other, become universal by degrees, the same as day gradually breaks forth after the dawn of morning has appeared.

הנאולה האחרונה תהיה מושכת למעלה במדרגה למדרגה ,  
 ממדינה למדינה , בארבע כנפות הארץ אשר בני ישראל  
 מפוזרים שם , כאילת השחר שעולה מעט מעט , אחת לאחת ,  
 עד שנתמעט השכח לילח ומאיר היום , ואז מושך עוד זמן מה  
 עד שזורח השמש , כן יתעלה קרנו של ישראל אחת לאחת ,  
 עד שיזרח להם השמש החדיד בפי וישלח גבי יעקב אבינו ע"ה ,  
 ויאבק איש עמו עד עלות השחר וגיו ויזרח לו השמש וגיו :  
 מדרש הנעלם :

i. e. the final redemption of Israel will be brought on step by step, from one country to another, in the four quarters of the globe, where the Israelites are dispersed; and like the dawn of morning, which breaks forth slowly and by degrees, until the darkness of night subsides and daylight prevails, and then, yet a short while elapses ere the sun shines; the Israelites will be

of the Ten Commandments, and an institution no less necessary than salutary, benevolent, and merciful. It was given "for all generations," "for a perpetual covenant," "as a sign between the Lord and the Children of Israel for ever," (Exod. xxxi. 16.), and to be wholly independent of times and places. Whereas sacrifices were ordained later, for the sake of weaning the people from idolatrous worship; and they could be lawfully performed in the Temple of Jerusalem only, and on no other spot, even in the land of Judæa (Deut. xii). Thus they must, of necessity, cease upon the destruction of the second and last temple. That, nevertheless, the public sacrifices are being continued to this day, at the regularly appointed times and seasons, if not virtually, at least, commemoratively, is too much to expect to be known by one who does not belong to the congregation of Jacob.

*Note 3.*

The first part of that assertion, I shall content myself with calling gratuitous; although it might deservedly be characterised by a certain emphatic gradually retrieving their rank as a nation, and, finally, the sun of success will shine on them. This is glanced at (Gen. xxxii. 24.) where it is said of the Patriarch Jacob (whom the Cabalists regard as a type of the Hebrew nation,) "And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day, &c.—and as he passed over Penuel, the sun rose upon him."

monosyllable, were it not for fear of offending polite ears. But let us see what the Reverend A. L. Loewenstamm, chief Rabbi at Emden, an excellent Hebrew theologian of the modern school, says on the subject.\* Maimonides teaches (Tract, Kings, Sect. 9) God gave Adam, the first man, six commandments, viz: 1, to forbear worshipping idols; 2, reviling the true God; 3, shedding innocent blood; 4, committing incest; 5, stealing; and 6, perverting justice. Properly speaking, we know this traditionally, down from the times of Moses; but in the Talmud it is further illustrated by references to Scripture. Noah, however, received a seventh commandment: "Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. ix. 4.)

He then goes on (Sect. 8.)—"Moses gave his laws and precepts unto the Israelites only." "Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob." (Deut. xxxiii. 4.) Any one belonging to another nation, and desirous of embracing the Mosaic faith, is accepted as a co-religionary; but he who does not feel inclined to do so, may not be persuaded, and much less forced to go over to Judaism. But Moses certainly ordered in the name of God, to compel if

\* *Der Talmudist wie er ist, oder wir sind alle Menschen*, Emden, 1822. The Talmudist as he is, or we are all men alike.

possible all the inhabitants of the earth, to acknowledge the seven commandments given to Adam and Noah. A stranger who acknowledged and kept those seven Noachide precepts, was called: *Gher toshab*, a resident stranger, according to the best translations. For such strangers only were allowed to domiciliate in the Holy Land. The Talmud further calls them, *pious strangers*; and declares them participators of eternal life; but they must not have adopted those precepts from a natural impulse, but on account of their being the holy commandments of God.\*

\* Maimonides indeed still adds another clause, namely, that a pious non-Israelite is bound to believe also that Moses taught the seven Noachide commandments. But as that clause appears nowhere in the Talmud, and is therefore a tenet of Maimonides's only, to which, as such, no legal force is allowed, it might have been left unnoticed here. Yet, on the other hand, lest we be charged with seeking to impose on the reader, by garbled and trimmed quotations, by no means an uncommon practice with theological writers, we thought it would be better to let it stand: particularly as, on second consideration, Maimonides appears to be right, because all religions are notoriously founded on the Mosaic; and universal history antecedent to Moses, and the notion of a true God, would still be greatly involved in darkness, but for the authenticity of the Mosaic records being generally acknowledged. Consequently, there is no religious person who does not believe in Moses and in his writings, although none but an Israelite is bound to follow his precepts. Thus, whoever acquiesces in the seven Noachide injunctions, cannot but also take for granted that they were promulgated by Moses; the only circumstance of the clause not being found in the Talmud, precluding its being considered as a law.

Again (Sect. 10.) "Generally as to benevolence and charity, which cement the construction of human society, those pious strangers are considered perfectly the same as Israelites; while any thing which the law contains of an exclusive nature, refers to rank idolatrous Pagans only. And as regards even them, the Talmud enjoins us to visit their sick, bury their dead, and relieve their poor, as if they were Israelites." Nay does not scripture expressly say, (Psalm cxlix. 9.) "God is good to all, and merciful to all his creatures." And Solomon speaking of the Law, calls out (Prov. ii. 17.) "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

The golden rules found in those noble and philanthropic sentiments of the great Maimonides, are all derived from the Talmud of which he is the faithful epitomizer; and from them it appears, that the observance both of the written and oral law of Moses, is an obligation on Israelites only, an obligation which cannot cease as long as they are Israelites. Whereas other nations are not only not bound to follow them, but—as God's supreme wisdom has deemed them fit for the Israelites only—they must not even expect a divine reward for a voluntary observance of them, if they do not formally embrace the Jewish religion. The seven Noachide precepts, on the contrary, every descen-

dant of Adam is bound to observe; and whoever obeys them is called a pious non-Israelite, who will be an heir to eternal bliss, and has an equal claim with the Israelite to our beneficence; and generally to every tie of man in a state of society.

Hence, if the nations amongst whom we live had descended from the Israelitish race, they would, according to the Jewish system, have inherited from their fathers the obligation to keep the Mosaic law, and their acting against it might be considered unlawful. But they did not. All the Christians existing in our days, are of Pagan and not of Jewish extraction. For besides that history enumerates all the Pagan nations, who were the parent stock of the Christians now dwelling around us, Scripture also offers the strongest proof of it. In the Acts of the Apostles, on occasion of a dispute about whether Paul had been right in not introducing circumcision amongst the Gentiles, (Acts xv. 13—14.) it is said: “And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name.” (*Ibid.* 19—20.) “Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from for-



nication, and from things strangled, and from blood." And (chap. xxi. 20—21.) James says to Paul: "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the Law. And they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews, which are amongst the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the custom, &c." (*Ibid.* 25.) "As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such things, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, &c." And that Paul did act upon that resolution, he clearly states in his epistle to the Galatians (chap. ii. 8—9.) "For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcised, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles, &c. They gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathens, and they unto the circumcision." And zealously as that intelligent apostle declaims against circumcision, in his epistles, particularly in that to the Romans, yet he nowhere maintains that Israelites need not be circumcised, but on the contrary, says: (*Rom.* ii. 25.) "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law, but if thou be a breaker of the law thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." And in

this the apostle agrees with the Israelitish laws ; for circumcision alone does not make a Jew, nor does baptism alone make a Christian. The ordinance of circumcision is only an initiation into Judaism : for the remainder, every thing depends on the circumcision of the foreskin of the heart. Thus says Moses (Deut. xxx. 6.): " And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayst live." (*Ibid.* x. 19): " Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart and be no longer stiff-necked." Likewise, (Jeremiah iv. 4): " Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, &c." and more the like. But that Paul himself did never forsake the law of Moses, he expressly declares to Festus, (Acts xxv. 8): " Neither against the laws of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cæsar have I offended any thing at all."

From the foregoing, it appears palpably true, that of all the Israelites who at that time became converts to Christianity, none ever went a step out of the Mosaic law ; and that it was only the newly converted Gentiles whom the apostles (and according to the above-quoted doctrine of Maimonides very justly) exonerated from that law.

Thus the Christians of the present day who notoriously follow the apostolic tenets, doubtlessly are of Pagan race, and on no account bound to keep the law of Moses ; nor may they expect divine reward for voluntarily observing the same, as long as they do not formally embrace the Jewish religion. The seven Noachide precepts alone, which the apostles themselves have enjoined, they are bound to keep as divine commandments ; and if they do keep them, they may, according to the declaration of the Talmud, be sure of inheriting eternal felicity.

That the Christian religion, in respect to doctrine, is as wide from the Jewish as heaven is from earth, is a fact too universally acknowledged to require further demonstration. That an Israelite believes his share of eternal felicity will be much greater than that of a non-Israelite, can be as little found fault with, as he himself can find fault with the follower of any other religion, for also putting in a claim to superlative beatitude. It is sufficient that we know from the Talmud, our only code, that the gates of heaven are open not only for an Israelite but also for a Gentile, who, conformably to the said divine commandments, walks in the path of virtue and morality ; and that eternal felicity will be the portion of the one as well as of the other.

I said, a Gentile who conscientiously keeps the seven Noachide precepts may expect eternal life. Not so an Israelite, who should presume to derogate from his duty by observing those seven precepts and none else of the Mosaic law : he will not find the gates of heaven open to him, as they are to the Gentile. Yes, my brethren, to the Gentile only, to whom divine wisdom has deemed proper to give no more than those seven commandments, and who consequently by keeping them fully discharges his duty ; to him, I repeat, eternal felicity is allotted in a degree consistent with divine justice. But we, Israelites born, who are in duty bound to regulate our life and morals after the maxims contained both in the law and in the Talmud, we are not at liberty to palter with a duty imposed upon us by the religion of our forefathers, because it may seem burdensome to our weak judgments or our earthly desires. The God of Faith will gravely visit every disobedience to his paternal laws. Yes, we are all sinners, every one of us, as the royal sage declares (Prov. xx. 9): “ Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin ? ” But, on the other hand, the great Psalmist pours healing balm into the wounded heart by saying (Psal. ciii. 13, 14): “ Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him ; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust.” And



even when the children incense their father, he chastises them severely; but still chastises them like a father. But he who, by denying his father, contumaciously and rebelliously deserts from his post—Oh, his end will be dreadful! The lamp of life goes out; no one attends him—no one cares—no one mourns for him. Nor will he ever see the dawn of “that morning.” (Psal. xlix. 14.) Besides, my brethren, it has been shewn that, according to the primitive spirit of the Christian religion, Pagans only who embraced the same were exonerated from Jewish observances; but that its adoption by Israelites, did not by any means release them from the ceremonial duties of their fathers. And, accordingly, the apostles themselves continued to observe the Mosaic statutes. For the apostle James roundly declares: “The Jews which believed were *all* zealous of the law.”

Whereas, to the Christians (descended as has been proved from Pagan race, and at no time subjected to the law) who faithfully observe the seven Noachide precepts, made incumbent on them by God, we may, on the authority of the Talmud and of Maimonides, guarantee eternal felicity.

And Christians certainly do keep the seven Noachide precepts. For that the Christian worship cannot be called idolatry, must appear to every one who is any way acquainted with the

New Testament, their principal book of faith. And it is distinctly said in the book Orach Chayim, (sect. 156), that the Christian religion is, anything but idolatry.\* This is not the place to engage in such subtleties abstractedly; nor am I at any time given to meddle with them. All I would say is, that from the true spirit of both the Jewish and the Christian religion, they may be compared to two pyramids of which the apices are perfectly alike; but from them downward they vary in a great many respects.

Seeing that the Christians, 1st. do not practise idolatry; 2nd. do not revile the true God; 3rd. shed no innocent blood; 4th. do not commit incest; 5th. nor theft; 6th. uphold justice. 7th. eat not flesh with the life thereof; and are thus ruled by the injunctions of the apostles, who evidently borrowed all this from the laws of Moses.†

\* The doctrine of Orach Chayim, that the Christian worship is any thing but idolatry, applies of course only to Christians sprung from Pagan race, to whose ancestors heathen Polytheism was forbidden by the apostles. Israelites are just as accountable for the slightest aberration from the unity system of their Old Testamentary creed as for outright idolatry. And this is the soul and substance of the Jewish religion. See Maimon. Tract. *Jesoda Hathora*, Sect. 1. Dog. 6. and Tract *Aboda Zara*, Sect. 2. Dog. 1.

† In this, methinks, I have discovered the reason why the Christians, contrary to the apostle's will in the above-quoted texts, do not abstain from blood and things strangled. Because, as said

then, what is a Christian, but a so called pious non-Israelite, to whom both the Talmud and Maimonides award eternal felicity, and to whom they enjoin us to shew kindness and charity, the same as to our Israelitish brethren? And, according to the latter, as to what regards taking interest, that rule both of Moses and of the Talmud about dealing with a foreigner נכרי (one who has no fixed settlement, is here to-day and gone to-morrow) has not the slightest reference to Christians, whom we certainly cannot call co-religionaries, though we may call them fellow-men and brethren, and are not in any way whatsoever allowed to injure them.

Not but what the Christian religion has been shockingly brutified in former ages ; and made to appear not unlike idolatry : for nothing but idolatry could have suggested the horrible deeds of the Crusaders,—the night of Saint Bartholomew,—the pyres of the sanguinary Inquisition, &c. &c. as propitiatory of a God who is all mercy, who requires no human sacrifices, no human blood. But as the Christians were then not far enough

before, they were bound to keep only the seven Noachide precepts as true religious laws ; and the rest was added by the apostles, merely in order to keep the Neophytes to abstemiousness, as they themselves say (Acts xv. 29) : “From which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.” And the latter Christian preachers, therefore, thought it best to confine the duties of their churches to the original precepts, without extending them.

removed from their Pagan origin ; they still had a hankering after that sort of worship ; the same as, with the Israelites, the propensity of worshipping calves notoriously, did not wear away until several ages after the deliverance from Egypt.

Hence the Talmudists who lived in those woful days, justly took Christianity for nothing else but idolatrous worship, or remodelled heathen mythology ; and accordingly considered the laws made against the latter, applicable also to the former.

But the farther the Christians got removed from their origin, the more absurd the Pagan religion began to appear to them, and the more congruent their own. The dark clouds dispelled by degrees, the sun-rays pierced through, and the Lord said : “ Let there be light ! ”

Well then, my brethren, idolatry has in a very great measure disappeared from the earth. It is only amongst inaccessible nations and amongst savages that it does still exist ; and there are yet countries where Christian politics and Christian avarice, even now, do not blush to countenance and protect it amongst the benighted aborigines. But all the nations around us believe in one God, in the Supreme Being, the Creator of heaven and earth. He, our God, who gave us his Holy Law which, as said before, we may on no account palter with or depart from, is the same God who has deemed it fit



for his wise and inscrutable purpose, to withhold that law from the ancient Pagans, the progenitors of the present Christians, and to limit them to the above-mentioned seven Noachide precepts, which constitute what is now technically called the religion of nature, in contradistinction to positive, i. e. revealed religion. The Christian descendants of those Pagans, conscientiously keep the seven precepts as the commands of that great God; and therefore are, to all intents and purposes, pious non-Israelites, who may expect eternal life, and who, as fellow-men, are our brethren; and the exercise of benevolence, charity, and kind offices to them must not be ostentatiously placed altogether to the score of the fine sensibilities of nature, or to that of fashionable cosmopolite philanthropy, but, according to the Talmud and Maimonides, be, with us, the same that it would be in respect to an Israelite; namely, a sacred duty dictated by the law. Therefore, my brethren, God forbid that under the cover of the law meant against the Pagans, we should, in the most indirect manner deceive or prejudice our Christian brethren, or do unto them aught which we would think wrong to do to our brethren in the faith.

And ye, too, ye well-thinking amongst the Christians, who, indeed, differ with us on doctrinal points, yet, as men, have no reason to be ashamed

to call us brethren, let the sun now shining forth never be darkened again; let superstition and prejudice no longer prevail over your better feelings. Clear away the rubbish of nursery and pedagogic reminiscences. Away with national animosity; dismiss from your thoughts the preposterous idea of a vengeance which God never commissioned you with, which God never will reward you for. Let us give each other the hand of fraternity. Why may we, who shall one day live together, in regions above, an eternity without hatred, controversy, or jealousy, not commence so desirable a life already here below? Why may we not yet, in our times, exclaim with the great king, (Psalm xlvii. 1. 2.) ‘O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great king over all the earth?’

*Note 4.*

So they are to a Mahometan; and the so much extolled Hindoo will demolish, on the spot, any cooking vessel of his that has been touched by a Christian. A Jew does not reject viands, merely for having been prepared by Christian hands, or by any hands whatsoever; but because they may contain ingredients either altogether forbidden, or not allowed to be made up together. Whatever

he may lawfully eat at his own table, he may as lawfully eat in company with, and even out of the hands of Christians.

As to drink :—we certainly know that strictly religious Jews will not drink wine that has not been made by Jews. Such wine is called *יין נסך* or libation wine; and the prohibition, probably, aimed at keeping the Jews from carousing along with their pagan neighbours, who, before they entered upon their potations, notoriously used to offer some of the liquor to Bacchus, or some other deity, as a libation. In a country where the Jews generally grew, and made their own wine, that restriction, which does not affect any other beverage, could not have been attended with great inconvenience. But as the supposed motive has long ceased to exist, the rule also is but very partially observed; and attended to only in religious ceremonies, which require the use of wine.

*Note 5.*

This has never been disputed. With the Jews, marriage is, and always was a civil contract, and not merely an “unessential point of religion,” as the author of the “Search,” &c., calls it. According to their marriage laws, laid down in the Talmud, (*Seder Nashim*, Tract. *Kedushim* chap. 1), and

which are in force at the present day, there are three modes of marrying, viz—money ; a deed ; and cohabitation : and technical proof of any one of those three processes constitutes a legal marriage. Placing a ring on the finger of a marriageable female,\* with her consent, in the presence of two witnesses, and at the same time pronouncing the Formula : “ With this ring I wed thee according to the Law of Moses and Israel,” is also held a good marriage. The *Chuppa* or Canopy, under which the Rabbi, or *Chazan*, reads to the bridal pair a *pro forma* deed of settlement, in the ancient Chaldee tongue, of which neither they nor any one else present, and at times not even he who reads it, understands a single word ; the versicles and benedictions which follow thereon, and, after the wedding dinner, are introduced merely for the sake of giving solemnity and publicity to the transaction. The omitting of those ceremonies, certainly, would be deemed indecent, but not by any means vitiate the contract, or nullify the marriage, which, according to the Jewish laws, can be effected only by another civil process ; but

\* The ring (which is likewise under the *Chuppa* placed on the bride's finger, with the same formula) is nothing else but a symbol or representative of a valuable consideration, one of the *modi acquirendi* named above, and is therefore required to be of pure gold. Probably the almost general custom of marriage rings is of Jewish origin.

not until after a patient and thorough consideration of such reasons, circumstances, and conditions, as are distinctly enumerated and fixed by those laws. In Holland, too, marriage is a civil engagement, which, in the first instance, must be entered into before the secular authorities; and may or may not, at the option of the parties concerned, be afterwards repeated, or hallowed in the Church, Mosque, or synagogue. But all the Priests, Ulemas, or Rabbis in the world cannot unbastardize the offspring of a mere Church, Mosque, or Synagogue marriage, or make of the mother an honest woman, as the saying is; whereas any Justice of the Peace, without distinction of religion, can. Women are daily made honest (civilly re-married) when the faculty of giving scandal has been long extinct; and children re-born (legitimated) when they are already with one foot in the grave. Since the Revolution, they manage those things in the same manner in France.

*Note 6.*

Religions are mere forms; they change and perish like all other terrestrial things. But *Religion* is eternal, and always the same. The exigencies of human nature, however, required that the *Eternal* should be blended with the *Evanescent*. Marvel not, therefore, at the variety of those forms—at their instability and decay.

Strip the spirit of its envelope, and you shall discover, in all religions, only one eternal religion.—*Schlachter, in Jedidia*, 1818.

*Note 7.*

No age has been so barren that it did not produce, amongst the Jews, some individual or other distinguished for learning, genius, and talent. Such an individual, however, generally lived in obscurity—stood, as it were, alone in the world, unnoticed, unencouraged, unpatronised; frequently harrassed and oppressed; if not always by mankind, at least by adverse circumstances, and mortifying positions—in a word, by the, in many respects, absurd construction of society (an invisible evil, and, on that account, all the more pernicious to the lovers of truth) and was separated from the rest of his co-religionaries. As, on changing his religion, he almost invariably changes also his name, he could no longer contribute to the fame of Jewry, or be an ornament to it. If the individual and his productions were not lost to it, the glory was. How many illustrious names of that description might be mentioned? How many of them creditably fill academical chairs even now? and how many hold high offices in the state, who, though not born themselves in

the Jewish faith, are directly descended of Israelites? \*

Accordingly, neither the most inveterate bigot, nor the most rancorous Jew-haters, ever pronounced them destitute of intellectual powers. On the contrary, they ridiculously gave them credit for more than natural sagacity, merely in order to have an opportunity of bitterly inveighing against the abuse they said they made of it, on all occasions in ordinary life. In this, however, they agreed, that it was utterly impossible that any sense of morality could ever develop itself amongst that people. And the insult was carried that length, that, in a critique, in the Göttingen Literary Advertiser, of Lessing's Drama, called "The Jews," the reviewer, without more ado, laid down the axiom: *There can be no such thing as an honest man amongst the Jews!*—MENDELSSOHN APPEARED. If, without a regular education, without foreign culture, but solely by the surprising energy of his mind, and by his native genius, this Jew lad could soar to this height of morality; if he can unite in his heart, true piety,

\* An interesting literary task, to be recommended to an Israelite, would be that of forming a catalogue of *ex-Judeis*, who enriched the republic of letters with their works, only during the last three centuries. Materials will not be wanting. He might begin with the great Chancellor, *Michael de l'Hopital*, and close with . . . . . ; taking no notice of those still alive.

complete resignation to the divine will, and universal philanthropy, why may not many other lads of his nation, equally as well?—was one question irresistibly forcing itself upon the reflecting. Does not the glorious instance of this young man prove beyond all contradiction, that with due encouragement, proper education, and culture, the mass of Jewry may be transformed into useful subjects, and ultimately into respectable citizens? was another question naturally arising from the former. Reason, experience, the example of other nations, true, unadulterated holy religion, all took the Israelites' part. Those thoughts kept germinating in the breasts of enlightened statesmen, under the government of some of the wisest princes; slowly, it is true, until, in the reign of the friend and protector of justice and virtue, they produced excellent fruit. The questions were answered in the affirmative, and the cause of humanity was decided. Heartless beings only, partly from ignorance, partly from selfishness, and fear of losing the monopoly of the rights and advantages of citizens, dare, even in our days, to vociferate No, No! But they are not listened to; their coarse clamour dies away upon the air; and ere long, people will be as ashamed of doubting the justness and propriety of the answer, as is, already now, almost every village schoolmaster of



repeating the axiom of the Göttingen Reviewer.

Mendelssohn's confidence in the force of truth was unlimited, and not to be shaken. In all but the circumspectness, which his peculiar position prescribed in following his presumed destination, he was as wide from hypocrisy as from fear of men. In this he resembled his highly revered friend, whom he, to the last moment, acknowledged as his teacher and model. Lessing's opinions were to him oracles. "I do not know," says Lessing, somewhere, "I do not know whether it is our duty to sacrifice happiness and life to truth; at least the courage and resolution which that requires, are qualities which we cannot give ourselves. But this I know, that if we want to preach truth, it is our bounden duty to preach it clearly and plainly, without inuendos, without reservations, without want of confidence in its power of convincing; and the qualities which this requires, are at our command. He who has taken no pains to acquire those qualities, or, when acquired, does not exert them, who seeks to divest us of gross errors, while he withholds from us the whole truth, and wants to put us off with something between that and falsehood, makes himself but little deserving of the human understanding. For, the more palpable the error, the

shorter and straighter the road to truth; refined errors, on the contrary, may keep us for ever removed from it, as they are so much more difficult to be detected as such." Hence the hypocritical and double-tongued, particularly the religious, were extremely odious to him. He would labour to find grounds of excuse, even for a renegado, who acted openly and candidly; but the dissembler he treated with ineffable contempt. This, too, was in the spirit of his friend Lessing, who says: "He who is faithless to truth, when danger threatens, may be her ardent lover notwithstanding; and she will forgive the defection, on consideration of the attachment. Whereas, he who only strives to pass off truth, under all sorts of masks and disguises, may be, if any thing, Truth's pimp; her lover, I am sure, he never was. And I scarcely can imagine any thing so vile as such a pimp to Truth."

His mode of, on the one hand, manfully contending for the rights and privileges of reason, and on the other, giving no offence to his orthodox brethren, was properly understood by only a few of his more confidential disciples. He quietly pursued his course, and was fain to avoid collision. As he held no office in his congregation, his conduct was not liable to the animadversions of

either the *strict* or the *free*. Whenever reform happened to be the topic in his circle, he frequently would check the youthful and sanguine, by, "Be not too hasty;" and the timorous and yielding, by, "Despair not. There is a time and season for every thing under the Sun." On those maxims, he persevered in his labors, always in good spirits, calm, and trusting in God. In his Hebrew commentary on the book of *Ecclesiastes*, which he published without naming himself, and, as it is announced on the title-page, for the benefit of indigent students, he ventured to arrange that ancient work after a new division, and to inform the reader, in the preface, with the elegance and quaintness peculiar also to his oriental style: that in this exposition he had availed himself of non-Israelite authors as well.

ואחרי אשר הזירונו החכמים לקבל האמת ממי  
שאמרו, הנה חפשתי גם באמתחת המפרשים  
אשר לא מבני ישראל המה, ואם מצאתי בפייהם  
דבר אמת, הרימותיו ל"ה, והי קודש

i. e. "seeing that our ancient doctors enjoined us to receive the truth of whomsoever renders it, I searched also the works of non-Israelite commentators; and what of truth I found in them, I saved for the glory of God, to whom it is dedicated." A very bold declaration, in those days! In the admirable preface to his translation of the



Five Books of Moses, he went yet a great step farther, and under his own name too, namely—he recommended to his brethren, the reading of the works of the very learned, but withal very independently-thinking Professor *Eichhorn* of Göttingen, particularly his introduction to the Old Testament, a work which has since become a source of knowledge and light to theological Tyros, and a guide to the proper study of the sacred writings. It was curious enough, that while ardent and courageous youth thought he had performed his translation of the Pentateuch with too nervous a diffidence, his more aged and soberer friends apprehended the most unpleasant consequences from the too great a latitude, they thought he had taken. They only, who stood near enough to him, and took an interest in watching the results of his efforts, could form a correct judgment of the liberality of his sentiments, and the harmony of all his actions; they only were able to solve all the riddles, and to appreciate the soundness of his principles. Every part of his conduct, even that which seemed discrepant, both in general and particular respects, resolved itself into concord, and proved to be consistent either with his prudence, or peculiar mode of thinking and feeling. The noiseless diligence, shunning all notice, the

forethought with which he arranged his plans, and above all, his practical wisdom, which indicated a degree of knowledge of the world, hardly to be expected of a man of his limited commerce, and retired habits, appears conspicuous in the following anecdote, taken from the twenty-first volume of the Berlin Monthly Magazine.

In the year 1760, a certain V——z, a Talmudist, and native of Bohemia, lived, as private tutor in the house of an opulent Jew, at Berlin. Besides great Talmudical learning, he had acquired also solid grammatical knowledge of the Hebrew language, and was very fond of reading the ancient philosophical authors, such as *Maimonides*, *Bachai*, &c. which being, for the greatest part, translated from the Arabic, contain some very difficult and dark passages. This induced him to cultivate an acquaintance with Mendelssohn, who was more able than any one to instruct him, and throw light on all the obscurities. V——z proved a grateful pupil, and an ardent admirer of his teacher.

After a lapse of some years, he resigned his situation as tutor, removed to Prague, probably his native city, took unto himself a wife, set up in business as a money-changer, and in that capacity, regularly attended the Leipzig fairs. His usual

learned pursuits, however, were not, therefore, laid aside. On the contrary, he was as attached to them as ever, and kept carrying on a literary correspondence in the Hebrew language with Mendelssohn. Perhaps he might not be sufficiently master of the German, although the works, either of *Herder* or *Lessing* were not, by any means, unknown to him.\* In the year 1778, he got involved, probably at Leipzig, in an untoward affair; namely,—he was suspected of being concerned in an extensive robbery, at least, of having bought the booty; and was sent to the Fortress of Pirna, where he remained upwards of ten months, heavily ironed, in a loathsome dungeon. Indeed, he seemed to be entirely forgotten; for neither trial nor sentence ensued on the charge brought against him.†

Thus lingering in horrid suspense, without a sympathising human being near him, he at length succeeded in forwarding from within his prison walls, a letter to his teacher and friend at Berlin, in which he describes, with all the vividness of

\* Those two authors were read with great avidity by the Jews, who then began to get a taste for literature.

† This should not seem incredible, or even improbable; since the Prussian Minister of State, Count von Arnim, quotes, in his celebrated work, an instance which happened at Frankfort on the Oder, where a Polish Jew died in prison, after four years confinement, without having ever been examined!



oriental phraseology, and in that, perhaps, not exaggeratedly, his mishap and sufferings, fervently imploring Mendelssohn's aid and intercession. But what could the philosopher do on behalf of an unfortunate, with the merits of whose case he was totally unacquainted, and, consequently, could not form an opinion of his guilt or innocence?

The politic sage found means to effect his client's liberation notwithstanding; and in the following manner. He wrote him an answer; but this time, designedly, in the German language, addressed the same directly to him, and sent it by the post. It ran thus:—

*Sir,*

“I duly received your letter of . . . . Knowing, as I do, your principles and way of thinking, I have not the least doubt but it is in your power to exculpate yourself. You did not mention what you are properly accused of; but whatever it may be, depend upon it innocence will come to light at last, and right still be right. The steps of justice to rescue innocence are slow, it is true; but let us hope all the surer for that. Moreover, as you bear your afflictions with such thorough resignation to the divine will, I hope to the God of our fathers, that the occurrence will not turn out so calamitous to your commiserable family, as it would seem at present. Whatever I can con-

tribute towards alleviating their cruel fate, shall be done with alacrity and pleasure.

“ In reply to your enquiry respecting the passage in *Kosri*, sect 4, § 1,\* I think that neither Muscata, in his commentary *Kol Jehuda*, nor Buxtorf, has rendered it correctly. The obscurity arises from the philosophical technical terms, which the translator simply copied, without taking the trouble of interpreting them. I give you my own version of that passage;† but deem it needless to subjoin an explanation of the terms which occur, p. 264, and which are very largely defined by Muscata; because I know you to be a practised thinker, and that, in answer, a hint is sufficient to keep you from missing the road to truth.‡

\* *Kosri*. A philosophical work in dialogues, by Jehuda Levi, of Grenada, in Spain, originally written in Arabic, An. 1090, or according to some, 1140. It has been twice translated into Hebrew, by R. Jehuda Aben Tiben, 1166; and by R. Jehuda Muscata, printed at Vienna, 1594. Vid. Wolfii. Biblioth. Hebr. T. 1. p. 449; also Buxtorf's preface to his Latin translation thereof. Basle, 1660.

† That passage containing learned by-matter, is here omitted.

‡ It is supposed that the literary enquiry in question was not made at all. Indeed, how should a captive laden with chains, in a German fortress, get hold of a *Kosri*, or even have a relish for philosophical speculations. He had, perhaps, applied for information at some previous period; but in all probability, Mendelssohn introduced the intricate passage of his own accord, to serve as a vehicle for his letter.



I wish from all my heart, that you may be liberated soon; and sincerely sympathising with your sufferings, remain, &c.

“M. M.”

*Berlin, 1774.*

The letter duly reached its destination, of course; and answered every purpose for which it was calculated. To foresee that it would be sooner read by the magistrate than by him to whom it was addressed, even less than Mendelssohn's penetration would have sufficed. However, as if by magic, the poor Polander was unfettered, uncaged, examined, acquitted, and discharged.

A pamphlet in Hebrew characters, anonymously published by V——z, under the title of “Letters by the celebrated Moses Mendelssohn,” (Vienna, 1794,) by Anton Schmidt, imperial privileged Hebrew printer, contains also the above epistle. That collection, most probably, has not acquired much notoriety even amongst the Jews. The late David Friedländer, Member of the Municipal Council of Berlin, and the oldest and most accomplished of Mendelssohn's scholars, on communicating, in 1817, the present article to the Jewish periodical called *Jadidja*, observes: V——z is still alive, but blind, and probably not in the best circumstances. It may be acceptable to the reader who finds this anecdote interesting, to

hear the victim of sluggish justice himself relate the effect of our philosopher's expedient. I shall give as close a translation of it as the two idioms will permit.

“In my distress, I called on Mendelssohn; he answered me freely and openly, in the sight of the counsellors of the city and of its inhabitants. It did not escape his sharp-sightedness that they would open his letter and read the contents. I thereby acquired great consideration in their eyes, and, indeed, they instantly came to me with the said letter to visit me, and to speak comfort unto me. They excused their proceedings with me in the following words: ‘It is not to us that the sufferings which you have undergone are owing, but to your accuser, who was so much affected by the loss of his money. But now that that distinguished man, Moses Mendelssohn, thinks you are innocent, who dare any longer to suspect you? If he take you for an honest man, who dare any longer mistake you for the contrary. We are sorry that God has led you into our hands in this manner; but we should be to blame if we did not forthwith alleviate your fate; if we did not use our endeavours to deliver you with all possible speed from this prison.’ And, indeed, neither had they rest, nor were they quiet, until they had procured me my liberation. Thus I was restored

to liberty, in the evening before the passover feast, at the epocha of our exit from Egypt. With a thankful heart I acknowledge, O Lord, and make known the mercy which thou didst show me, through the man who now resteth in Eden.”

NOTES TO MENDELSSOHN'S REPLY.

(See page 168.)

POLAND was many years the grand seat of Talmudical academies, and supplied the German Jews all over Europe with Rabbis. The Portuguese Jews always had their own seminaries, and Chachamim, men of quite a different stamp and education, chosen from their respective congregations, Rabbinical seminaries after the Polish fashion, and called *Jashibeth*, existed also at Prague, Nicholsburg, Fuerth, and Frankfort on the Maine, where the Talmud, and nothing but the Talmud, was taught by Rabbis and assessors appointed for that purpose. In the larger communities, minor foundations under the names of Bet Hamedrash, Talmud Thora, Clause, Dabar Tob, &c. were established by endowments. The object of the teachers (nearly all Polanders), was directed towards perfecting their pupils in the art of cavilling on Talmudical passages and points, enabling them to understand



its numerous commentators ; and, if necessary, to write fluently on it themselves in the Rabbinical style. The Pentateuch, &c. which every boy was made to learn from his earliest infancy, frequently already in his fourth year, by a petty schoolmaster, the synagogue-reader, the beast-killer, sometimes by one serving in both capacities, or by a private teacher, generally an indigent Talmudical student, (Bachur) "Bachelor," and through which he had further to work his way, with the help of vile German translations—the Pentateuch, was almost wholly neglected in those schools, and so were the more lucid commentators, such as Aben Ezra, Levi Ben Gershon, Abarbanel and others, alike with the Spanish philosophers, who were usually reserved for the leisure hours of the few speculative men amongst them. The cause of this was not merely the great expenditure of time required for a regular Talmudical course ; but also the Rabbins' aversion to, or rather dread of, pure intellectual study, while polemizing on visible subjects, was a sort of amusement to them. The Rabbins at all times considered philosophy a formidable enemy, and at all times tried to crush it.

But what made those schools be in high estimation amongst the Jews, that they supported them so liberally and confided their boys to them for some years ; sensible though they were of the

necessity of practical information as well, which for all that they did not bestow upon them until they became adults, and then bestowed it very niggardly—is what we shall shew here, as it had a decisive influence on the Jewish character.

The chief and most important object was as formerly, to acquire a thorough knowledge of the whole body of Jewish laws, to correctly observe them, and be able to discourse on them with competent judgment. As the Mosaic and biblical records did not contain all that has been developed from them in the Talmud, and as such developing was out of the power of any one, no knowledge of the law was possible without the Talmud, and its study therefore a thing necessary of itself, nay, necessary to every one, for every one had to observe those laws. With them, un-Talmudical Judaism was almost tantamount to heresy; *Caraitism*—scarcely imaginable. Mere complying with custom and blindly performing ceremonies, which for the greatest part, one had been habituated to from one's infancy, was held disgraceful and accounted clownishness, however good a scholar one might otherwise be. Hence the opulent fancied they earned superlative merit by founding these Talmudical seminaries. All other species of information, thought they, might be got amongst Christians. There was yet another advantage

ascribed to the Talmudical schools, an advantage which has been frequently taken notice of in modern times, and which appears somewhat curious. The Jews entertain an idea that the method of teaching pursued in those schools, exceedingly sharpens the intellectual faculties; and that the sagacity in worldly affairs which certainly cannot be denied them, as well as their keenness; so much animadverted on and deprecated, is even the immediate fruit of that study. They therefore send their sons thither to learn to think deeply, that they may, with the greater ease, master any other science they may have occasion to apply themselves to, in the sequel, or manage their commercial concerns with the more consummate address and penetration. That second consideration could not have been pleasant to the really pious Rabbins, nor did they ever recommend the study of the Talmud for that purpose. Still the various instances of success, with which young men of a Talmudical education began to pursue extraneous sciences, rendered the Rabbins both proud of their Panacea, and indifferent to any other species of learning, which they thought but little of. Every Rabbi who had not already, perhaps by other means, acquired a sufficient idea of the mazes of the higher sciences, was and is still of opinion, that the acquiring of both those of



Mathematics and physics would be mere boy's play to a thorough Talmudist. The deeper that opinion took root, the more strenuously the Rabbins abided by the branch of study assigned to them, not even deigning to cultivate grammatically holy writ which they almost know by heart; because they consider grammar as impeding the rapid action of thought generally required; in which opinion they are seconded by not a few of the Christian learned, who justly lay more stress on soundness. It is not our intention now, to write a criticism of the Rabbis themselves, but merely to distinctly show the elements of their own education, and of that which was brought into vogue by them. For the rest, it is a matter of no small pride to the admirers of the Talmud, that the most erudite Christians wrecked on it.

But if the Rabbins were excessively smitten with their Talmud, it is but justice to own, that they saw the highest merit in the practice of its precepts; and penetrating into its true spirit endeavoured to inculcate on their congregations, along with theological dogmas, probity and internal morality. They apprehended of other sciences, neglect of religion and too much worldliness. Accordingly, in modern times, they were not so prolific in writings, avoided all discussion on their own religion, which they considered as standing



firm enough without; but were the more diligent in giving oral instruction when required, and in applying to study themselves. The few Rabbinical books, which appeared for the last hundred years, consist either of short essays on Biblico-Talmudical exegeses, of no material importance; collections of decisions of ritual questions, or controversies on points contested amongst themselves. There were not many large and comprehensive works brought out, if we except the compilation of Talmudical laws, with which in Poland many a one fills folios, as it were for pastime, and then puts them into circulation; productions which gain their author an ephemeral reputation, but are neither sought after nor indeed of any use for the extension of regular study. Of the older classics, they frequently got up new editions with comments and emendations. On the other hand, there also here and there appeared men, who, although quite Rabbinically bred, took a fancy to Hebrew grammar, and trying their strength in it, displayed much industry and skill; but on account of their ignorance of the sister-dialects, could not do any thing for the advance of the science.

The observation, that even the disciples of the Talmud, either constrained or enticed by worldly pursuits or ends, no longer so strictly attended to the ceremonial law, as many ascetic Rabbis in

Poland considered necessary to constitute a holy life, induced several of the latter to withdraw still more from the world, and bear themselves so mystically pious as to set their brethren a laudable example. The seeds of this had been sown long before by the deep-rooted *Cabala*; and it was destined to retrieve, in a new sect, the triumph which Christianity had already wrung from it, in the Sabbathaians שבתי צביים (*Chassidim*). There had been existing in those parts long ago, men who totally abstained from animal food, renounced all sensual pleasures, and kept frequent fasts. As this sort of piety suited the taste of but a few, while, nevertheless, the mysticalness in which it was wrapped gained its votaries great reputation, and here and there excited also a spirit of imitation, nothing was wanted but a leader to collect the like-minded individuals under one banner, and form a regular sect of them. Such a one at length appeared in Israel Baal Shem,\* i. e. Man of God—Worker of Miracles—who lived first at Tlusdi in Poland, then at Mendiziboze in Podolia, and whose life and fortunes are described in a

\* In 1740. Peter Beer, Geschichte der Jüdischen Secten, vol. ii: Gregoire, Histoire des Sectes Religieuses. Israel Loebel, unter-Rabbiner zu Novogrodeck in Lithauen. Nachrichte von der Secte Chassidim genannt.

reprint of a little book, written partly in the rabbinical and partly in the Jewish-German idiom, of which five editions were sold off within a few years 1814—1818, but whose doctrines and maxims were published by himself and by his followers.\* We shall mention only the most essential things contained therein. In the opinion of that party, Israel was the greatest wonder-doer that ever existed, and particularly the cures which he wrought are highly celebrated amongst them. They recognize him as God's representative on earth; and his commands are followed as if given by God himself. He principally recommends a contemplative life,—the greatest possible devotion during prayers,—frequent bathing in running streams,—and above all, passive obedience to the Zaddik (pious man) i. e. the local chief, answering to the Chacham or Rab elsewhere. The founder of the sect himself was the first Zaddik in office; and on his demise, three of his most distinguished disciples, all his grandsons, were appointed as Zaddikim each in a different district. Since which the sect no longer forms a single body, but a confederacy of several distinct congregations, which are more and more increasing.

\* He himself published *Ziwaath Ribs*, i. e. "The Precepts of R. I. B. S. (Rabbi Israel Baal Shem)." Kether Shem Tob, (Crown of a good name) appeared after his death.



This is no wonder, seeing that from 10,000 souls, which the sect mustered at the outset, its rolls after a lapse of ten years, are said to have contained no fewer than 40,000. In this, as in all analogous cases, it was the leader's death which gave it its full importance. For while the Baal Shem was alive, his thoughts were bent on nothing else but forming ascetics, and availing himself for that purpose of the means afforded by their ignorant sequaciousness. But after his death, it was found in the books published about him, particularly in "Toldoth Jacob Josef," (1780,) that he had ascended to heaven, where he associates with the angels, and could at all times act as mediator with the Deity. That he grants absolution and remission of sin, to every Jew who engages to bring up his children after his (the Baal Shem's) principles, and to a diligent study of Talmud and Cabala. The adversaries of the sect affirm that he not only gave his adherents plenary absolution of past sins, but also indulgencies for all future ones ; which, by the by, we think highly improbable, unless by future sins, we are to understand inadvertent omissions of ceremonial observances, or sins of ignorance, as they are called. From the Zaddik's work, "Likuta Amorim" (Collection of Aphorisms), they quote the rule, that every one should endeavour to get into the highest state of sinfulness, in order to

approach the Deity on the opposite extreme. This no doubt arises from some misunderstanding or other, which the opposite party purposely keep up, in order to cast an odium or ridicule on the sect.\*

The members are all called Chassidim, i. e. pious men, and their conduct and morality superintended by the Zaddik in office, who exercises

\* Perhaps in the writings of Cardoso, who, according to Zizath Nobel Zebi, p. 36—41, philosophises in a manner quite peculiar to himself. "The Talmud," says he, "teaches that the Messiah will not come, until the Jews are either all condemned, or all acquitted. It is easier to realize the former than the latter; now all the Jews in Africa are therefore requested to become Mahometans for the good of the nation at large, and in order to hasten the salvation of the world."

On this, Jost remarks (L. c. vol. viii. p. 479), "A degree of imbecility is here imputed to the partly highly intelligent and well-informed Talmudical doctors, which one hardly would expect of the lowest of the people. Where is he that could prevail upon himself to repudiate every thing he holds just and sacred, and take all at once to a course of turpitude? And suppose there are fanatics who practise vice from a sense of religion, such an hallucination cannot make proselytes of whole multitudes simultaneously, and for many years after. But it is all a mistake. The sentence quoted from the Talmud does not refer to general morality, consequently neither to virtue nor vice; but the true sense of it is, that a time will come when extremes shall prevail, and all Jews either live in strict conformity with the law, or entirely depart from it, so as to require a complete regeneration. And even this version might convert but few: while the majority were probably enticed by external allurements, or betrayed into it by party spirit."

absolute control over them. Hence that dignity tempts the ambition of many, for its incumbent is not only highly revered, but also abundantly supplied with finances, while his family and relations are looked upon as a kind of patrician order, with whom the rich are eager to form matrimonial alliances. According to their statutes, all differences arising at the election of a Zaddik, are left to the decision of the other Zaddikim for the time being. The mass of the people are kept as much as possible in the dark, about the Zaddik's domestic routine of life; they are rarely admitted into his presence, and then only on consideration of liberal donations. But for the higher class, he holds every Saturday afternoon a kind of circle, when they sit down with him to the *שלוש סעודה* or third Sabbathic meal. During that repast, to which each guest comes provided with his own provisions, the Zaddik delivers *allo improvviso*, moral, cabalistic, and exegetic lectures on two or more promiscuous scripture texts, given out by the company; between which texts he establishes a connexion, so as to make them harmonise together. He never preaches publicly on any other occasion, nor does he act in any other rabbinical capacity, except as umpire in private litigations if appealed to. He also, from time to time, makes a journey through his district, on which occasion



he is attended by a large retinue of young men by way of a body-guard, to keep off the multitudes that come flocking in every direction to obtain a sight of him. In all other respects, the Chassidim are Talmudical Jews; in their synagogues they follow the Spanish and Portuguese liturgy, and their songs and hymns are throughout cabalistic. A Zaddik countenances and encourages mysticism in every shape. Science and learning in general he despises, as well as every thing else which may, according to the notion prevailing amongst them, be of no good but to disturb the contemplations of the inward man, during his union with the deity; and so far as all that goes, we see nothing very exceptionable in their fundamental system. The abuses inseparably linked to passive obedience, however became soon apparent in the sect, viz. the cupidity of the Zaddikim, miracle jugglery, keeping the ignorant and illiterate in the leading-strings of new-fangled rites and religious exercises, vitiating the people's minds by inculcating the direct agency of good and evil spirits, and every other sort of gross superstition. But what renders that order of things most pernicious, is the Zaddikim's absolutism, set off as it is by something like aristocratic external grandeur; and so does the distance between the Chassidim and the other Jews, whereby amongst the former, servility and

pride go hand in hand, and all liberal education is totally proscribed.

Their literature, as may be supposed, is thoroughly mystic; and their standard works are: "Likute Amorim; Likute Amorim Tinjane; Kitzur Likute Amorim; and Sepher Hamidoth," all published between the years 1806 and 1811 by Rabbi Nachman, grandson of the great Baal Shem, and which contain the entire doctrines of the sect. But the book which ranks highest with them, is the already mentioned "Shiveh Habesh," i. e. "The Excellencies of the Baal Shem," which in the space of a few years was published in Hebrew, at Kapust, Berdiczow, and Lascerow; and in Jewish-German, at Lascerow, and at Ostrow, making in all five editions. Besides these there are quoted: "Kether Shem Tob (see above); Noem Elimelech, by Rabbi Melech of Lezantst; Yismech Lew; and Igereth Hakadesh. All these are considered by the members as holy writ; and it is from them that they draw their grand principle *אמונת חכמים והתקשרות לצדיק* i. e. faith in the ancient Talmudical sages, and fealty to the Zaddik. Accordingly he bears in those works the most exalted titles, such as, Rab, Rabbi, Rabbi Amiti, Zaddik, Zaddik Amiti, Zaddik Haddor, Zaddik Hassalom, Zaddik Haemmoth, Gadol, Gadol Haddor, Gadol Amiti, Chacham, Chacham Haddor, Chacham Haemmoth, Chacham Amiti,



Nassi, and even Melech. It is to that fealty that they attribute the perfection of the soul, which it illumines with a true knowledge of the Supreme Being, and causes the *Dewekath*, or its cleaving to God; and lest that be marred by *Azwuth*, i. e. melancholy, they are directed to keep a cheerful mind; for which purpose the use of mead is recommended to every Chassid, which he must drink on Fridays after a hot bath (a very common practice in Poland) in order that he may be in high spirits at evening prayers. The *Dewekath* or copulation with the Shechina, is mystically consummated by prayer. Accordingly, at every service there is said, a prayer called *Leshem Yichod*, i. e. To the name of the Unity, which formula was, in the beginning, censured (particularly in 1778), by Ezekiel Landau, a Rabbi at Prague. By that copulation they tell you the Zaddik begot innumerable angels; and on that egregiously hyperbolical insinuation, they subsequently founded their assumption of the title of *Cheverae Kadesha*, i. e. holy society; which title, however, they have dropped since. Nevertheless, the Zaddik himself, whose mediation can effect every thing with God, is still accounted a holy person, and his family enjoy the highest consideration; they are all *Mejuchsim* or "high-born," and on them no curse or malediction can ever take effect. The wearing apparel and imple-

ments left by a deceased Zaddik are, in their writings, recommended as preservatives against sinning, —and on emergency also as means of propitiation. Thus his cap is good for pride, his sash for evil propensities, his nether-garment for fornication, and his phylacteries for impudence. But his tomb kept carefully locked and bolted, and shewn only to pilgrims on making a handsome compliment to his widow or family, is reckoned above all things propitiatory. The highest degree of munificence to the Zaddik, is expressly enjoined, in order that his thoughts may not be diverted by worldly cares from more exalted subjects. So also are the members directed to undertake frequent journies to his see, for the sake of being blessed by the effulgence of his light; while he, in return, is to pay occasional visits to the different congregations in his diocese, by way of diffusing salvation. Whoever accompanies him on those circuits, or waits upon him, thereby gains eternal life. The various duties of such a gratuitous menial include that of filling and lighting his pipe (for the Zaddik is generally an inveterate smoker), and that of porter at his chamber-door. Fancies like these, coupled with abundance of marvellous stories, operate in a most extraordinary manner on the members' minds, and naturally push their devotedness to the chief to an extreme.

This effect shews itself more particularly at the grand annual meeting in the month of Tisri, when they repair in shoals to the Zaddik's place of residence, where the more noted amongst them are regaled by him on plate, while listening enraptured to his penitentiary sermons. Oratorical tricks, gesturing, and other mystic expedients, have procured the sect a prodigious accession. In the beginning they were found only in the deserts of Ukrain, Wallachia, and the Carpathian mountains: at present, they are scattered all over the Russian empire, wherever Jews are permitted to sojourn, and also in Gallicia and Hungary. Rabbi Salomon Lozner alone presided over 80,000. The number of leaders, as well as their astonishing sumptuousness, is still on the increase: and it certainly would be worth the while of governments, to obtain a more correct knowledge of the intestine condition of a fraternity like this, which is moreover despised and disowned by the rest of the Jews.

Besides its mysterious exterior (the most catching of all epidemics; and to which more particularly the common people become a prey), there is still another internal agency, which cements the union of the order, and, despite of the very frequent occasion for pecuniary oblations, not only preserves it amongst the old members, but also contributes to draw new ones: namely,—a prospect of the most



perfect peace of mind. An analogous feeling will be found to prevail, wheresoever absolution of sin, the tranquilisation of a turbulent conscience is of easy procurement. There are no happier people on earth, than those who, with unreserved confidence, put themselves under the guidance of another person, acting in the name of God. Whatever their deeds, they concern the attorney only; it is his business to make every thing right with God; and, for the rest, he knows how to arrange matters with his clients, who may be honest and virtuous, knavish and wicked, just as suits their convenience, without being overmuch put in mind of themselves by their conscience. Nothing disturbs their serenity; they relish their existence, and are exposed to no untowardness, except perhaps, too heavy a tax imposed upon them by the Zaddik; but who, in return, will avert all natural afflictions, or, at least, vindicate them on religious grounds, so that they may be born with the greater patience and resignation.

When that sect first sprang up,\* the Poland Rabbins took it for an effluxion from *Sabbathaism*, and, truly, in this they were not much mistaken. They were highly scandalized at the excesses which spread amongst the members thereof,† who medi-

\* Thorath Haknaoth, p. 26. et 52.

† 1750.

tated nothing less than the total suppression of the Talmud; and, in a town in Podolia, a certain *Meshullam* burned a copy of it, in the middle of the Jews' street, on a holiday, while the rest of the faction were handing about cabalistic tablets, as *Panaceæ*, and also amulets.\* Accordingly, the Rabbins hurled anathemas, at the persecutors of the Talmud collectively; but at the authors of the cabalistic tablets individually, and by name.† Him, however, whom they more especially persecuted, was *Rabbi Jonathan Eibeschutz*, who, on account of his already acknowledged great—nay, according to some, prodigious—learning, displayed in several extensive Rabbinical works, was called from Prague to Metz, and thence to Hamburg, to officiate as Rabbi of the three united congregations there,‡ notwithstanding he had been accused formerly of cabalistic mystification. That very numerous class, the Polish Rabbis, were extremely active on that occasion. They issued pastoral letters to all congregations, recommending the crushing of the new sect, strenuously protesting against the cabalistic tablets in circulation, ridiculing the author's ignorance, and, at the same time, decrying the learned R. Jonathan, and his

\* 1755.

† Epist. var. ad Jacob Emden, in Lib. Shimush.

‡ Hamburg, Altona and Wandsbeck.

pupil *Chajim Lublin*, as impostors. It is true, that even he, notwithstanding his superior understanding, was given to those absurdities, or, which is more likely, imposing upon himself.\* However, his subsequent conduct, for aught we know, was blameless. Still *R. Jacob Emden*, grandson of the shortly before deceased Limburg Rabbi of great celebrity, (a most learned man, who had a printing establishment in his house, and got up all his own works,) did not forbear reviving the long-forgotten charges, and from commencing a fierce attack upon him. Eibeschutzer, firmly established in his rabbinical chair, and acknowledged as a theologian of the first order, deigned not to repel those charges in a direct manner, but published a book, not very creditable to his acute mind, in which he gave out that the efficacy of the cabalistical tablets had been satisfactorily demonstrated. That work met but with very partial approbation, and upon the whole, bred him more enemies than friends. It appeared at Altona, in 1755, under the title of *Luchoth Eduth*, and deserved the sensation it excited, on account of the skill with which, without at all entering into the merits of the points proffered against him, he dismisses his accusers, merely by reproaching them with their own want of due form, with credulity,

\* *Eduth Bejacob*, p. 32.



and falsification; on account of the thereunto annexed letters addressed to him by a great many Rabbis, and finally, on account of his addictedness to cabalistic quibbles, least to be expected of a man like him. When we read of the extensive measures of the public and epistolary transactions, in all parts of Germany, the east of France, and in Lithuania, we cannot but be astonished at the wide range which that dispute had taken; and what adds not a little to our astonishment, is, that we rarely meet in those measures and correspondence with rude fanaticism; but on the contrary, notwithstanding the religious zeal, not to be mistaken in them—that very zeal exerting itself in the vindication of persecuted innocence, in which the synodical decree of the Polish rabbinical council of *Jaroslav*, 1756, particularly distinguished itself. All the rest followed that example, in consequence of which, the accusatory publications were ordered to be burned and prohibited, and R. Jonathan was fully acquitted.

Disputatious R. J. Emden, however, was not silenced by that work; but wrote one against it, entitled *Eduth Bejacob*; in which he strove to ridicule Eibeschutz's productions, and expose his intrigues. According to his rather prolix, and withal very invective statement, the documents put

in by the other party, were either paltry, subditi-  
tious, or forged. Eibeschutz's conduct certainly  
is open to censure, particularly his vindictive per-  
secution of Jacob Emden, whom the elders of the  
Hamburg congregation ordered to quit that city,  
whereby he was obliged to withdraw to Amsterdam  
until his proscription was revoked through the  
powerful interest of the King of Denmark. The  
most singular thing in Emden's book, is a formal  
announcement of the above-mentioned *Jaroslaw*  
*Synod*, dated the identical day of sitting, whereby  
the same men (with the exception of a few  
absentees) declare, that hitherto, their resolutions  
and proceedings had not been free; but that the  
government had interfered in the affair, and  
exerted its influence, particularly in the passing  
of the final decree. Accordingly they would  
not be responsible either for its tenour, or for  
whatever might result from it. Rabbi Emden  
also gives many extracts from the other party's  
works. However, his renewed accusation proved as  
ineffectual as the former, it being too notorious that  
he opposed Eibeschutz from mere personal ani-  
mosity. Still, the debate itself kept attracting  
several fresh partisans. Rabbi Heshel of Frank-  
fort-on-the-Main, and Rabbi Samuel Heilmann  
of Metz, enlisted under the Emden banner.  
Rabbi Ezekiel Landau of Prague condemned the



cabalistic tablets to the flames, and entailed anathemas on whomsoever should place faith in them; but at the same time, declared Rabbi Jonathan to be a pious man, and forbade to molest him.\* The Emden party then changed their tactics, and indicted their antagonist to the Danish government as a sorcerer, and the case was referred to the investigation of two learned doctors. One of them, Charles Anton, a converted Jew, and professor of rabbinical literature at the University of Helmstadt, reported in Eibeschutzer's favour; although, according to Emden's version†, that report was elaborated by Eibeschutzer himself, who for a valuable consideration got the referee to affiliate it. Against this report, the professor Megerlin of Frankfort-on-the-Main, the other referee, bitterly inveighed. He would shew Charles Anton's great ignorance, while with a great deal of self-conceit, he contended that neither Sabbathaism nor sorcery were anywhere discoverable in Eibeschutzer's writings, but that pure Christianity was; inasmuch as the name of Jesus Christ was easily to be deciphered on the tablets in question. In this manner too, he acquitted the accused, although on quite different considerations. Eibeschutzer let them go on as they pleased, and passed his life in peace and tranquillity. Only Jacob Emden

\* 1752. † Metheg. Lecham. x. 110.

kept crying out against those irregularities; and not unjustly neither.\* For to this very day Eibeschtutzer is venerated by the followers of Sabbathai Zebi, as one of their saints and apostles. And in fact, he had several defenders amongst the Polish and Moravian Rabbis, who in the sequel, were all found to be Sabbathaians. The affair however gradually died away. It will be shown further on, that the Polish Rabbis managed entirely to eject Sabbathatism out of Jewry, so that the great number of Sabbathaians, who have since

\* The chiefs of the sect carry about them a badge or medal, by which they make themselves known to one another and to the members. It is of the size of a half-crown piece, and coined like the Abraham coin mentioned in the Talmud. On one side it has

זקן וזקנר  
בחור ובתולה

and on the other, the letters

א ש  
י ד

evidently the initials of **אברהם שרה יצחק רבקה** but underneath there appear again the letters

א ש  
י ד

with this difference that the **ש** is a *Shin*, and not a *Sin*, and instead of the *Resh* there is a *Daleth*. Thus read:

אליהו, שבתי, יונתן, דברושקי

the four chiefs of the sect. Elijah the Prophet, *Redeemer*; Sabbathai, *Messiah*; Jonathan (Eibeschtutzer)—(This proves how justly he was accused of heresy)—and Dobrushki, i. e. Frank; which latter name he only adopted in Germany, as did his two nephews that of Frey, under which they resided at Paris, where they were guillotined in the days of Terror.

been residing in Poland known as followers of that sect, and even holding high official situations, are outwardly Roman Catholic Christians. But they were not equally successful in their crusade against the Chassidim, who for that very reason might be induced to adopt a distinct constitution, inasmuch as the Sabbathaians rejected the Talmud ; whereas the Chassidim would not vow its total destruction ; and because they just thereby formed a passage to Christianity, the Rabbis abhorred them as most dangerous schismatics. Rabbi Elijah of Wilna, a man of distinguished abilities, celebrated for his commentaries on the books of Moses, on some passages of the Talmud, and on the Digest of Jewish Laws, wrote point blank against them\* In him that sect found a most unrelenting adversary, even before it had yet spread very far. Afterwards, Rabbi Israel Loebel of Mohilow, both wrote and preached against them ; he also engaged in a controversial conference with one of their most eminent members, and travelled about the country for the purpose of checking the progress of the schism amongst his brethren. Besides him, Ezekiel Landau, the Prague Rabbi, notorious for his bigoted opposition also to Moses Mendelssohn, wrote against them the

\* Siphse Jeshenim, continued up to 1806, contains a catalogue of all the writings of the Rabbis quoted on this occasion.

book "Noda Beyuda;" so did Joseph Steinhart, Rabbi at Furth, in his "Sichron Joseph;" and the chief Rabbi at Limburg, in his work "Merchebeth Hamishna." All that, however, passed off without any material consequences. The sect still maintains itself in all its vigour (1828). At all the great trading fairs they perform separate divine worship, which is an object of burlesque to the Rabbinites; although in many places, the Austrian government will not allow them to hold public meetings.

The Rabbins know very well that they cannot prevail against that sect, for they dare not venture to condemn Cabala altogether. It is true they highly disapprove of its practical application, or what is called קבלה מעשית, but they are not able to fix the extent of its allowable influence on religious rites; and objections they can raise none, as long as they themselves are dealing so much in it. A number of cabalistic prayers, hymns, and formulæ have crept into the Liturgy already in olden times. To expunge them is what the Rabbis dare not do: they themselves still believe in charms, adjuration of good and evil spirits, and occasionally have recourse to those practices. How then could they contend against a sect, by whom Cabala is held in still higher consideration? No barrier was raised

between utility and abuse.\* Not but what there might, though, if they had returned to the old Spanish system of expounding holy writ as simply and naturally as possible; but then, in their opinion, the Talmud must have got into jeopardy. That schism, therefore, put the Rabbins to no small dilemma. In Poland they cut through the Gordian knot, now by anathema, now by stunning their pupils with new Talmudico-exegetic works. But in Germany, where meanwhile elementary education had got into vogue, those productions no longer met with anything like the former demand; and the Rabbins' conflict with Cabala just then being at its height, students become bolder, went yet a good step further, and overhauled even what their teachers had left untouched. There was the more necessity for this, as the Chassidim would, from time to time, send forth emissaries to several congregations, who preached in the synagogues to deaf audiences, it is true, and all but laughing in their faces. But reflection and enquiry were at

\* About 1740, a protest by several Rabbis of Germany and the north of Italy against a prayer in *Machsor* (High-festival service) containing invocations of the angels, was dismissed by Rabbi Simson Marpurgo, otherwise a very profound thinker, as a dangerous innovation; although he himself did not approve of the like prayers, unless they were sanctioned by antiquity.—*Resp. Rab. S. Marpurgo*.

any rate excited ; and along with the hallucinations of that sect, also many rabbinical redundances were detected. Moreover the germ of an antidote for hyper-rabbinism had already been supplied independent of those excesses. For what the Rabbins ought to have effected themselves, namely, a revival of the grammatical study of Hebrew, now burst forth impelled by minds of quite a different texture, who directed its lovers to quite a different course. The mist of Rabbinism began to disperse.

DEGENERACY OF SABBATHAISM.—JACOB  
FRANK, OR DOBRUSCHKI.

Berachia, the supreme head of the Sabbathaian Sect, at Salonichi, was still living, when in 1760, an adventurer called Jacob Frank, a native of Poland, in his youth a distiller of brandy, and subsequently renowned in the Crimea, and part of Turkey, as a Cabalist, removed in his thirty-eighth year to Podolia, where he preached Sabbathatism with prodigious success. Such was the force of his oratory, and so preponderating his interest over the clamour of decrying Rabbins, that entire congregations went over to him.\* In

\* Sepher Shimmush, p. 1. et seq.

one of the Jews' streets, they burned a complete copy of the Talmud to ashes, and prevailed on the bishop of *Camentz* to prohibit that work for being of a dangerous tendency. It was the *Sohar* which engrossed their veneration, and of which they propagated copious extracts pressed into the service of their system. Upon making the following public confession of faith, they obtained of the bishop letters of protection, under the denomination of *Cabalists*.\*

Every *Soharite* (for so, also, the sect called itself) is bound to believe:—

1. That the adoption of the holy precepts of religion must be founded on a perfect understanding of the Oral Law, as deduced from the Written; and on the conviction arrived at thereby.

2. That religion must arise from the knowledge of God, else it is mere outward show. The fear of God, and the love of God, is the fruit of such knowledge, if deep. But for that depth, those qualities could not strike root.

3. That there is a profound inward sense in the maxims of Moses and the Prophets, which must be searched after. None but idiots take the garment for the body; and sticking to mere dead words is wrong and foolish.

\* Shebet al gaf Chasillim. appen. ad superadit. lib.

4. That the interpretations made by the Talmud are full of that error, inasmuch as they lead to inferences which favour immorality.

5. That there is but one God, creator and preserver of the universe.

6. That this God manifests himself under three persons.

7. That God appeared on earth in a human form; that he cast it off upon the fall of man, and finally resumed it for the purpose of redemption.

8. That Jerusalem will never be rebuilt; nor is any Messiah, in the flesh, to be expected; but that God will once more appear in the human form, and redeem mankind from their sins.

This is, briefly, their confession of faith; and, no doubt, that for the sake of ingratiating themselves with the bishop, they mixed up with it more Christian *Momenti*, than were ever taught by their founder. So, also, is the apology annexed to that confession, for the greatest part, a mere echo of Christian theologians, and, hardly applicable to the spirit of the sect. This, of itself, is a degeneracy of Sabbathaism; and that extravagance was just what caused their ruin. The prelate who patronized them, happening to die shortly after, the Rabbins were not tardy in taking advantage of that very confession, for crushing them. They found it no difficult matter



to show both the court of Warsaw, and the Pope's nuncio, the hypocrisy which palpably characterised that pretended confession ; and to obtain efficient secular—and of the papal see, also spiritual—aid, to remove the nuisance. The growing sect, terrified by the stern proclamations, which, in aggravated cases, even threatened its followers with the stake as heretics, resolved upon emigrating to Moldavia. On the arrival of the first caravan there, they were informed against, to the pacha, as pretended Jews ; and being as such, out of the pale of the Constantinople High Rabbi's protection, the Turks plundered them of their all. The rest, thereupon, embraced the Roman Catholic religion. But as they did not refrain from Judaizing, and still held secret meetings, half their beards were shaved up to the skin, by way of rendering them conspicuous for duplicity ; and as many members as could be discovered, were condemned to hard labour. Several, however, contrived to make their escape ; and of their descendants, who keep from intermarrying with those of other religions, many considerable men are to this day, filling high offices in Poland, particularly at Warsaw. They all bear the best character for integrity. *Jacob Frank*, who, after having turned Christian, still persevered in his practices, was, in consequence thereof, locked up

in the fortress of *Czenstochow*, where he remained a prisoner for several years. But when, in 1773, that fortress was taken by the Russians, they set him at liberty, and he again travelled all over Poland, Bohemia, and Moravia, promulgating his religious tenet, on which occasion he collected large sums of money amongst his disciples. The report of this, soon swelled his party; and he travelled in a princely state, attended by a numerous suite of Christianised Jews, amongst whom, there were several learned Rabbis. In that pomp and magnificence, he lived some time at Vienna, which capital, however, he was ordered to quit in 1778, having become obnoxious to the police. He removed to Brunn, in Moravia. Jewish youth of both sexes kept continually joining him. He even organised for himself a military guard, dressed partly in green, partly in scarlet uniforms; for which he was abundantly supplied with the means, by his Jewish brethren in Poland, from whom kegs full of golden ducats would arrive several times a-year. Now and then, he would assemble his household for prayer, in the open air; and on those occasions, was environed by his splendid carriages, outriders, lancers, and standard-bearers with gilt stags, eagles, suns, and crescents. That solemnity was always concluded by an equestrian's pouring water on the ground, from a skin bag with

a ewer fastened to it, a rite of which the meaning has never been discovered. Again he sought to settle at Vienna, and again met with a repulse. At last he tried (1785) *Offenbach*, near Frankfort on the Maine, where he obtained leave to establish his head-quarters, with a retinue of fifty persons. One of the most splendid mansions was forthwith engaged; and here he took the title of *Baron*. Disliking being stared at, he led a secluded life, seldom admitted strangers, and was visible to the public only on Sundays, when driving to a neighbouring Roman Catholic village to hear mass. His body-guard were exercised regularly every day in the fore-court of his mansion, and in the evening they were made to attend lectures on chymistry; for what purpose, is not known. For the rest, Frank was universally respected. When at church, he performed his devotions contrary to custom—covered, and prostrated full length on the ground, in the oriental fashion—no one would ever think of interfering. Himself, as well as those belonging to him, lived in peace, and the best harmony with the townspeople; while to the little borough of Offenbach, their presence proved a most valuable acquisition; as numbers of Sabbathaian Jews, constantly arrived there from the Eastern countries, bringing with them rich presents, and, in not a few in-

stances, returning to their homes almost pennyless. Many of them would send their grown sons and daughters thither, who, it is said, were never after heard of. Generally those sectarians bore a very fair character.

Frank's followers enjoyed that state of prosperity only a few years. He died of apoplexy, on the 10th of August, 1791, at the age of seventy-eight. His funeral was extremely grand, and followed by upwards of eight hundred persons, who, in him mourned for the bereavement of their benefactor. He had not been dead long, ere his two sons *Rochus* and *Joseph*, and his daughter *Eve*, were unable to keep up the accustomed magnificence, and the sect began more and more to fall away. The subsidies from abroad entirely failed, and when the Frankfort and other capitalists, already considerably involved, hung back from further financial transactions with them, they sent forth, in 1811, to all the congregations in Germany, a circular letter in the Hebrew Rabbinical idiom, and written with red ink. It contained an invitation to embrace Christianity, once before published by old Frank, in 1767, also a third edition of a pastoral letter, full of denunciations, of which the second had been got up by the same in 1768; and finally, some hortatory pieces, the substance of which it may be superfluous to insert

here. The epistle was signed by three converted Jews.

That experiment, notoriously, proved a failure. The nearer connexions of the Frank family dispersed in various parts and the sect lost its nucleus in Germany. The wreck thereof, which still preserves itself in Russia, and chiefly in Poland, forms, in the utmost secrecy, a kind of order, of which the pursuits bear the outward appearance of mystic philosophy; but the real character of which, is still unknown. Nor does the Turkish government seem any more to concern itself about it. All its members who live amongst Christians, have been baptized, and, therefore, are part and parcel of Christianity; their few Judaizing customs will soon dwindle away to nothing.

REMARKS ON MENDELSSOHN, &c.

BY J. M. JOST.

NOTWITHSTANDING Mendelssohn's thoroughly Rabbinical attitude, we not only count him amongst the opponents of Rabbinism ; but although his dissenting spirit escaped the notice of the most rigid Rabbis, in his Hebrew writings, we think ourselves justified in directly considering him the beginner of that opposition. Nay more : that it did not develope itself casually from his works, and the use made of them in teaching youth ; but that he was distinctly conscious of it, and directed his endeavours to give the religion of the Jews another foundation than it had to common appearance ; to spiritualize and exalt it, and together with it, draw his co-religionists out of darkness, and rout many a prejudice. The inducement to come forward thus openly with his views, he found in Dohm's celebrated work " On the Civil Improvement of the Jews," which first appeared

in 1781, and excited a universal sensation. This was by no means the fugitive attempt of an individual, to bring a new idea into credit by its novelty ; but the freely expressed result drawn from the circumstances of the times, new principles of government, prevailing philosophical doctrines, as applied to this particular subject ; therefore the work was so multifariously read, and now applauded now disapproved of, but without asperity. The treatise properly is in the line of statesmen, and the Jews are only the subject of it. Dohm endeavours to contravert the objections hitherto offered to the civil incorporation of the Jews ; to substantiate by their own history, the complaints made against the Jews themselves, so far as they are founded on truth ; but at the same time to propose just that civil emancipation as a remedy against those complaints, and demonstrate its future effects. He makes it to consist in, 1st. putting them on an equality of rights with the rest of the citizens ; 2nd. admitting them to all trades whatsoever, encouraging them to handicrafts in particular ; and 3rd. to husbandry ; 4th. drawing them off as much as possible from commerce, but not by force ; and where commerce is carried on, obliging them to keep regular books and in the German language ; 5th. allowing them to profess all arts and sciences ; and even appointing some to public

offices ; 6th. providing for a better system of education amongst them, and regulating their schools in a more suitable manner ; 7th. preventing the offensive tampering of Christian teachers ; 8th. granting them perfect freedom of worship, together *with the right, enjoyed by every other religious community, of expelling on the principles of universal prevailing canon-law, either for a time or always, dissenting members* ; without, however, any prejudice to them in their quality of citizens ; and 9th. granting them a certain autonomy in such civil matters as are connected with ritual statutes.

The two last proposals roused our philosopher. Anyhow as a disciple of the philosophers of his times, the French in particular, (to whom, if he did not owe his turn of thinking, he at all events owed his manner of treating subjects) he hated every description of ecclesiastical power and above all the right of expelling ; and his sentiments thereon were very well known. Had he been a Christian, he certainly would have proposed to put the Jews on an equality with the rest of their countrymen ; and nothing but his position as a member of the community interested, made him refrain from writing on the subject. It was the less a matter of indifference to him, since he felt besides highly concerned in clearing up a great and widely spread error. Both Jews and Christians were of opinion



that theological freedom of thinking is incompatible with Judaism ; and that if a full scope be given to it, real Judaism must fall at once. This had already been a source of vexation to Mendelssohn, in the strange conduct of Lavater, excusable only from religious zeal, who took some verbal expressions of his for proofs of an apostacy from Judaism ; therefrom, either seriously or pretendingly, concluded a bias to Christianity ; and scrupled not to invite Mendelssohn, through the medium of the printing press, to make a public confession of his new faith. Every one murmured at that inconsiderate act ; and every one was pleased to see Mendelssohn reply to him with the most perfect composure, and without in the least committing himself. This inspired Lavater with still higher regard for him. But when Mendelssohn saw even so liberal a man as Dohm fall into the same error, he thought it time to deliver his own opinions on canon-law, which then could not but of themselves intrench on Rabbinism. This he did in his preface to *Manasseh Ben Israel's Vindication of the Jews*, which he had translated from the English, and presented to the German reader as an appendix to Dohm's work.

After quoting several passages from the preface, Jost proceeds thus : “ We do not know whether the Rabbins felt the full force of those assertions,

and particularly of the considerations on which they are founded ; since they never were heard to say anything publicly about them. The majority probably passed over them with a good deal indifference, as Mendelssohn had just then published his *Translations* only, and did not seem to aim at any influence on Judaism ; whereas the reading part of the nation, who already felt the highest regard for the philosopher, devoured his words with the utmost avidity, and heard with pleasure, one of the wisest men raise his voice against a too rigid Rabbism ; as they foresaw that the latter would no longer, as formerly, throw obstacles in the way of the more and more improving education of youth. The learned amongst the Christians, however, noticed, with so much the stronger sensations and watchfulness, the importance and great effect of those opinions never before so seriously pronounced by a Jew ; and they reasonably concluded that Mendelssohn designed to crush the power of the Rabbins completely. But how that could be consummated without a simultaneous dissolution of Judaism, was puzzling enough to men used to the notion of the identity of Judaism and Rabbism ; the more so as, in his external demeanour, Mendelssohn strictly adhered to the Rabbinical statutes : fresh attacks would, therefore, not fail to be tried.

Accordingly, the anonymous "Search for Light and Right," with its Postscript by a certain Parson "Möerschel," appeared, and was soon succeeded by an addition to the same, by D. J. B. Hesse.\* The former, it is true, inserts many a sarcastic and ironical comment; but on the main point, his is the opinion of several individuals besides himself. The author of the addition enters deeper into the subject; he again takes up the definition of the essence of religion, in the same words in which Mendelssohn gave it, without meaning the Christian religion; and this he does to show that this very definition fits the Christian religion only, and that Mendelssohn, according to his own declaration, certainly would have consigned himself to Christianity, if he had not been deterred by the abuses still prevailing in that church. At all events, he plainly enough states the grounds for his resistance to ecclesiastical statutes; and further vindication he needs none. In the main point, namely—ecclesiastical restraint, every one will concur with him; and a great deal would be done, if in this the opinions of both religious parties were approximating. But the more important step Mendelssohn made, is his explaining the idea of religion as

\* The Editor regrets that his efforts to procure the "Addition," proved abortive.

being all *spirit* and *heart*. He is, therefore, yet far from accepting the subsisting Christian confession, unless it should remove all the objections raised against it by true Jews; and the Rabbinical attitude of Mendelssohn, and other similarly minded Israelites, may therefore very well consist with their rejection of every description of restraint.

Mendelssohn was much affected on reading those publications; and in the former, he was rather vexed at the misapprehension, which, to judge from the tone of the work, was designedly worded captiously, in order to perplex the philosopher. Such an important defiance he could not pass over in perfect silence, however he might wish that an enquiry of that sort had been introduced in a pure scientific manner, and without the odious intermixture of his own individuality. In order more distinctly to unfold his views, he composed the *Jerusalem, &c.* The most important thoughts analysed in that very beautiful work, as far as style is concerned, are the following:—

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Taking into consideration the originality of those most remarkable conclusions of one of the greatest men in the Jewish world, and the in-

fluence they had on readers, we cannot refrain from somewhat further elucidating them, in order to see more clearly through, and appreciate their aim. That they are of no use either in controverting Dohm, or for confirming the Jewish law amongst the Jews, is obvious at the first view; and to believe that the philosopher who wrote that work, was not aware of that himself, would be giving him but little credit for consistent deduction. For, first, if Dohm will allow a Synagogue-penal-right (although the right of excommunicating might really be too severe, as Mendelssohn correctly shows), that does not necessarily imply the punishing of opinions about religion; nay, according to the view, that the Jews had only to perform actions, ecclesiastical discipline would even be more in its place there, than in the Christian church; since the Rabbis would have to punish *actions* only, without confining, by their constraint, freedom of thinking. Secondly, if, as Mendelssohn says, the ancient Jewish law, intimately and inseparably united Religion and State, the entire law must expire along with the destruction of the state; since there was no where any distinction made between precepts for individuals, and precepts for the community at large. Every individual to whom Mendelssohn grants the privilege of self-enquiry, would just thereby



be justified in considering the downfall of the Jewish state, the most formal abrogation of a law, which, as Mendelssohn himself declares, none but the God who teaches by nature and realities, could have given; and there would, at most, remain to a Jew, the hopes of a future restoration. Least of all, needed Mendelssohn to upbraid the conscience of a Jew gone over to the Christian religion, with an infraction of the law; since just by his own freedom of thinking, it could not, according to nature and realities, have been forbidden to an Israelite, even during the existence of the Israelitish empire, to join another people, and adopt their laws. If birth deprive of that right, every family which should constitute itself into a petty state, would stand by itself, and the human race would consist of all isolated families and states. A Jew who secedes from his people, also rejects their law; and although Jesus might not deem its abrogation absolutely requisite for his times, states more advanced in civilization would demand a recantation; since legislation, combined as it is with Christian views of religion, could not retain the Mosaic form. And if, moreover, the religious law which he is henceforth to obey, have only for its object the maintaining of immutable truths; if it is to be only the shell for keeping the kernell; must it not tranquilise every one's con-

science, when there is given to him another, and, according to his own views and enquiry, a better and more durable depository, to save his treasure in? Mendelssohn must have perceived this evident discrepancy; and therefore his book appears paradoxical.

However, on a more careful investigation of his design in composing that work, and, excepting a rather too far carried wresting of meaning, we see, that he avails himself of the criticised proposal of Dohm, only as a vehicle to deliver publicly his thoughts on constraint of opinion, and to show the mistake of imagining him to be a partisan of Christianity; just as if a setting in of self-consciousness must needs evidence a simultaneous falling in with the Christian church! He wants to prove that a scrupulous abiding by the Jewish laws may subsist along with freedom of thinking; nay, that it is our duty to foster an alliance between them: therefore, when we want to form an opinion of Judaism and the Jews, we must not refer to the standing religious forms; for the law is not the religion, but it only contained formerly undertaken engagements to ritual observances, which preserved the notions of religion, without opposing their more developed exposition. This thought, though not original, has never been so seriously pronounced by a true believing Jew,

and its spreading could not but become highly dangerous to Rabbinism. For, to say nothing of the abolition of the mastery, and even despotism of the Rabbis, he led the Jews to enquire more deeply into the spirit of traditional forms, and ask themselves, whether, even acknowledging the revelation of a law, every thing extant really do flow from the law before them? Might not the errors and fallibility of more ancient Rabbis deduce wrong or false inferences from it? Might not many abuses be introduced? How much of the law does, in fact, pertain to the ancient Israelitish soil, and how much to religion? Nay, freedom of thinking being allowed, it was quite natural to question even the binding force of the ancient law in foreign countries; although Mendelssohn will not admit the question, since he considers that point beyond all doubt. At all events, even with his straightness of delineation, observable in all the digressions of the work, he gained the object of referring his brethren to their own doctrine; of cautioning them against hypocritically confessing another faith, and of providing or preparing a new standard to judge the Jews by. The Rabbis did not read his works, and seldom had any misgivings as to their effects; and if they had, they wanted the means of counteracting them. The cultivated Jews took up the germs of the new



plantation, and made them thrive. When the translations of Holy Writ took root, they became the principal study of the modern Jews; and the Rabbis no longer found the Talmudical schools resorted to, either so prematurely or so numerous as heretofore. This they ascribed more to the nature of the times, than to Mendelssohn, and (a few hostile ones excepted), they beheld in his Hebrew writings, and his translations, a not un-acceptable supply of their own confessedly defective mode of teaching. His task was accomplished when death called him away. He had become the most un-ostentatious and most successful reformer of one of the most unbending religious communities: nay, he defended them against their oppressors, with that philosophic calmness, with that philanthropic warmth, and withal irresistible eloquence, that even his most zealous opponents did not deny him their high respect; many of them sincerely loved him, and all who dwelt on the history of his life, acknowledged at least the necessity of a reform of the Jews, and declared for using efficient means for bettering their condition. Moreover, his distinguished morality and rare virtues, gained him the esteem of all; and his last controversial writings, although already exposing weaknesses, still excited great interest. His memory will

never die amongst the Jews; and his writings will produce glorious effects yet for a long time to come.

As, even in the opinion of the Jews, the structure of Rabbinical power was undermined by the writings of Mendelssohn and others—its fall was certain. Many other bright geniuses co-operated in it. In the year 1783, a society was formed at Königsberg, for propagating knowledge and morality amongst the Jews, by means of a periodical work called *Meassef*, “The Gatherer,” of which Isaac Euchel, Simon Zacharias, Samuel Friedländer, and also Michael Friedländer, afterwards a physician and celebrated man of letters at Paris, were the principal managers. This periodical, the first that was ever published by Jews, inserted articles by accomplished Jews, whether they contained Jewish affairs, or occurrences of the times, delineations of abuses, valuable hints, and generally instructive subjects, even fictions, poetry, imitations, and translations, provided they were written in good Hebrew, or good German. Through the medium of that periodical, as rich in matter, as it was inappreciable for its effect on the cultivation of the Jews, and to which also Hartwig Wessely,\* and

\* Jost, L. c. vol. ix. p. 80.

David Friedländer,\* were splendid contributors, many other rising men of letters became known to the world, some of whom highly distinguished themselves; while their less celebrated colleagues, afterwards belonging to the mercantile class, rendered themselves very useful by their attempts at diffusing elementary sciences, such as the rudiments of history, geography, and natural history. As champions against Rabbinism, we shall principally enumerate:—*Wolf*, teacher at Dessau, who made a trial of writing a compendium of religion; *Isaac Satnow*, the rigorous grammarian at Berlin, externally living in the Rabbinical style; *Mardochea Gumpel*, afterwards Professor *Levisson* at Upsal; *Joel Loewe* (called *Bril*) the commentator and distinguished philologist, professor at the Jewish William School, at Breslau, he who engaged with the celebrated Consistorial Counsellor *Paulus*, in a learned controversy about the chronology of the Malabar Jews;† and who was highly panegyrised by *Campe*, and other learned characters, as a man of excellent genius; Professor *Wolffsohn*, at the same academy; *Tobiah Boas*, physician at the Hague; *Marcus Herz*, Professor and Aulic-Counsellor at Berlin, celebrated as a

\* Jost, L. c. vol. ix. p. 87.

† Eichorn Kritische Bibliothek.

physician, and natural philosopher ; *David Franco Mendes*, at Amsterdam ; *Herz Homberg*, superintendent, by imperial appointment, of all the new schools then being instituted in the Austrian states ; *Theodor Joseph Veit*, and *Baruch Lindau*, at Berlin, &c. &c. Besides the many beautiful specimens of poetry, which gave new life to the Hebrew language, that periodical, published four years at Königsberg, and afterwards three years longer at Berlin, did a vast deal of good. Animated to efforts still more useful, the co-operating members effected the establishment of elementary schools at Prague, and new Bidschoff, in Bohemia, at Presburg, and divers other places, extended their salutary effects, and excited imitation. The physicians therein recommended the inoculation of small pox, then strenuously resisted by the Jews ; they also wrote scientifically and soundly against the Jewish practice of prematurely interring the dead, which abuse was, after a great deal of arguing for and against, at last totally abolished in the Prussian dominions, through the efforts of a society of Hebrew youths, established at Berlin, in 1792, for the support of reduced and sick members, for promoting propriety, regularity, and a more becoming tone of conversation, and for putting a stop to all Rabbinical pragmatism. Great men of antiquity became more known

through that periodical, and their lives were held up as an example; evident perversities of the Rabbis were justly exposed; the fair sides, the fine discourses, renunciation of prejudices, and more enlightened views of some of them interspersed as exemplary hints; and thus that institution may be considered as a school of true cultivation for the Jews.

It is not altogether easy to delineate the influence which those labours, and particularly the inception of scientific life, might exercise on the religious opinions of truly cultivated Jews. The introduction of religious compendiums had been tried, but an air of two-fold embarrassment was not to be mistaken in them. First, the detaching of that subject from biblical instruction was quite new, and on that account, it was difficult to fix on a method which would have embraced the whole province, while most of the teachers wanted sufficient energy to beat themselves an even path. They therefore mostly took Christian school-books for their models, and as it was necessary to leave out the doctrinal part, there remained for internal religion only a small account of ideas, on which there was but little to expatiate, and the vacuity was obliged to be filled up with ethics. Secondly, they seemed not to have made up their mind as to how much they should leave to Judaism, and how

much of its consuetude they should condemn as abuse. Moreover, there was a want of good schools; every father of a family, every youth began to think on religious matters, particularly on outward observances, when convictions of the unessentiality of the ceremonial laws forced themselves upon them, at the same time that no one could tell what else to substitute for those ceremonies, since youth had been trained to nothing else. Thus they found themselves in no small dilemma. Pure Deism, it was apprehended, would soon degenerate into levity, because it offers no resting point; while, on the other hand, they saw that existing Judaism no longer kept place with the progress made. What was to be done now? Which system was to raise that embarrassment?

We think we have observed that nevertheless the following maxims, got by tacit agreement, as it were, into credit with the thinking Jews, whereby their constant predilection for Judaism still maintained itself, and those who lived ever so unrestrainedly were deterred from going over to a church where so many advantages beckoned them: viz.—That the Jews were not a chosen people, in the sense in which that term had been taken till then, was admitted by every one; and such liturgical expressions were considered merely a standing

form. Yet the Jew would maintain that he could draw true religion nowhere but at the fountains of Holy Writ accessible to him, provided they stood the test of reason. The ideas of Christianity continued to appear absolutely strange to him, and no one believed that it was possible ever to make a confession of them conscientiously and free from hypocrisy, without the convictions afforded by education and habit. All the gold which all the missionary societies dedicate to an object holy with them, that of converting the Jews, will provide only a proportionably small number of proselytes, and amongst those but few convinced ones. The stamina of Judaism is yet vigorous enough to be sure of a still longer duration. That true religion consisted in the convictions of the supernatural revelation made to the patriarchs of Israel, to Moses and the prophets, consequently in believing that there is a God, and that he mediately made himself known to men, for the purpose of instructing them, that God's providence rules the universe and is specially mindful of man, whom he estimates according to moral worth, and will hereafter render him according to his deeds, which necessarily supposes the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The morality of Holy Writ was considered the only correct one, in as much as it corresponded with the maxims to be received; and

therefore not only a moral life was required, but such a one as was constantly acting from a sense of religion, and not from stale worldly philosophy. On the other hand, they cleared away all discrepancies, and made circumstances account for every statement of Holy Writ, which might divert from its general morality; so for instance of all actions of the patriarchs that are censurable, according to our notions, such as duplicity, craft, deeds of violence, and the like, evasive explanations were given. The same expedient they found themselves induced to have more or less recourse to, with the miracles which some would sophistically reason away altogether, and some try to reduce to natural causes; but which certainly would not go down quite generally. At all events a certain degree of vacillation is not to be mistaken, and it was with the education of youth where they were most irrelative how to proceed. As to the ceremonial law, they never completely spoke their mind about it, but no one could help agreeing with Mendelssohn that they are nothing but the shell of the kernel; and in sifting the enormous rabbinical additions, they soon began to make a distinction between what was essential and what was not. As they could not deny the Mosaic legislation a divine origin, without oversetting Judaism altogether, all the additions foisted upon it were discarded,



and they arrived at the conviction, that the greater part of the laws still extant as seemingly applicable, were not fulfilled in the sense of the legislation; because they were calculated for the original land only, and could not be perfectly kept in other countries. Again, that whatever had for its object the keeping apart from idolatry and its sensual followers, must not be extended to Christianity and its followers; that in foreign countries also, many duties must turn up which are repugnant to the legislation for a Jewish state, such as military service, &c. In short, that until the not-to-be-calculated restoration of the Israelitish empire by the expected Messiah, only such precepts of the law are to hold, as tend to, and serve for, the preservation of the kernel of religion, and as are adapted to form of its congregations a piously religious union, without their being hostile to existing relations or to the improvement of the mind. In this manner, the religion still continued orthodox, although not in a rabbinical sense. For upon those principles, every individual who without levity sought to get rid of old impressions, became induced to preserve his children from all prejudices against Christians, and from shunning an intercourse with them; to teach them to exercise brotherly love without distinction of religion, reject many ordinances for being unessential, discontinue

many customs for being superstitious, and in the end, to respect, merely for the sake of preserving the community, divine worship, the holidays particularly dedicated to it, and other indispensable requisites of religion. They mainly adopted the maxim; "For the individual there is internal, living, spirit-and-heart-inspiring-religion; for the congregation external worship and forms." This was diametrically opposite to Rabbiniism, and no less so to the not altogether absolvatory assertions of Mendelssohn, who maintained, that in the present times and relations, the laws of the Jews are duties and obligations undertaken by every one of them individually.

Whilst we may thus take a pleasant retrospective view at the progress made, we must not dissemble that the wished-for change of Jewish thinking and living did neither immediately nor every where yield good fruit; nay we cannot but agree with the numerous ephemeral writers, who take their subjects more from the follies of others than from the sciences, that for want of proper guidance, the striving to reform, and to strip off old defects produced fresh blots, which were noticed by all cultivated men. The middling class of Jews were but just emerging into life, they had to pass through a childhood and an adolescence. The Rabbis they had got rid of; whereas there was a want of men

who knew how to teach religion with dignity, and in a manner becoming the subject. The novice, to whom the ancient sources were inaccessible, was looking out for direction and instruction; and at length, he found with the French philosophers and their German imitators, enlightening, as it was called. The mind stripped off its fetters; there was the freeman, it is true, but without having served the necessary apprenticeship for the right use of that freedom. Thence arose intestine discord, which was screened by vanity only; they kept aloof from their homely brethren, sought more elegant society, and by so doing only exposed themselves. Nor did youth who, without regular preparation, were studying the origin of religion fare any better; for after all they were obliged to betake themselves again to commerce.

Without having been at a finishing school, every youth, every maiden once in possession of the High German idiom, through the translations of Holy Writ, was impressed with the necessity of making still further proficiency. At any rate the construction of society demanded more refined language and politer manners. Wherever a youth visited, the company discussed philosophy; the Talmud did not supply him with the means of taking a part himself; and to study the great German philosophers, he either wanted books, or the

necessary preliminary knowledge. He, therefore, had nothing left but a recourse to the Hebrew philosophers; Maimonides and Judah Hallevi were his models; and the book *Moreh*, if need be, with the addition of Solomon Maimon's *Kanteism*, *Cosri*, *Jedadya Hapnini*, and others, were diligently read and animated the philosophical spirit of the rabbinical students. Inflated with those unsystematically combined thoughts, which could not be methodized by Mendelssohn's writings, many of them fancied themselves philosophers and talked consequentially, which ill-became them. He who got on so far that he conceived himself qualified to figure in public, would come forward now with so called philosophical strictures on —, now with a vindication of Judaism, now with moral extracts from the Talmud, illustrations of scripture texts, &c. &c.; and the illiterate believed they heard and read so many new Mendelssohns. Half-learned merchants liked to see themselves noticed and marvelled at, in the company of accomplished Christians; while the old-fashioned and less progressing Jews found themselves isolated, and frequently made a laughing-stock of by their own brethren, who considered an entire waving of outward religious observances commendable, and a sign of superior education. However, as even that licentious party had not yet by a good deal made such proficiency



as to enable them to justify their conduct with satisfactory reasons ; but were only prompted by childish vanity, they reaped nothing but disapprobation ; namely, on the part of the Rabbis for their irreligion, of the estimable anti-rabbins for their deviation from the straight road to knowledge, and of Christians for their ridiculousness. Those irregularities, moreover, called forth a multitude of pamphlets and satirical caricatures ; which could not fail causing a good deal of exasperation and scandal. Nor could it well be otherwise. The first reforming spirits towered too much above the age they lived in, and with the exception of Mendelssohn, who really knew how to let himself down to the people, advanced at too swift a rate, so that the more weak, for whom no suitable provision had been made, were obliged to stay behind. Establishments for education were wanting both for youth and adults, nor were there either teachers or catechisms ; and the defect was particularly visible at divine worship, which was less and less understood by the moderns, and not rendered heart-bracing by proper instruction. Hence the synagogues were deserted by those aspirers at further refinement. Theological study neglected, religious life disappeared, and along with it many an excellent homespun virtue ; so did temperance, peace of mind, and domestic happiness. From this there

also sprang that class of conceited half-bred literati, of which the Jewish nation can produce enough, the fruit of that liberty and no liberty wherever it does exist; and who are only the more encouraged in their self-complacency by the indulgence of truly learned men. However, when at length political writers began to notice the nuisance, and sought to remedy it by efficient means, it was too late with part of the more informed Jews, who preferred Christianity to that ambiguousness, and drew after them many others, who think no more of shifting religion than they do of shifting a coat.

Jewish education, at length, made considerable progress in the Prussian states. That seeming refinement with which we reproached the times immediately succeeding the Mendelssohnian era, was soon forced to make way for another spirit more conscious of itself. Every source became open to the Jews, and a way was paved to honour and distinction for superior merits to those required only by success in trade. A truly scientific career allured one, the arts another. Occasional appointments in the civil department, the admission of practised artists as members of the Royal Academy, the placing of clever men into municipal offices, and generally the encouragement everywhere given to ability, could not but spur the emulous to perfect themselves as useful

members of society. The pretensions of the half-advanced were ridiculed and put to shame; and even the commonalty knew very soon how to discriminate real merit, from outward shew and a parade of words. Jewish painters of both sexes, formerly a very extraordinary sight, now furnished distinguished specimens for the annual exhibition; virtuosi performed with applause at public concerts; some qualified themselves for private teachers of mathematics, ancient and modern languages, and some even proved no mean acquisition to the stage.

But nothing is a stronger evidence of the progress made, than that the Jewish schools were frequented by a considerable number of Christians; the Berlin free-school alone, had one-third of Christian children amongst its scholars; while members of the board of general education, as well as clergymen, bestowed, in the public journals, praise on the services rendered by that institution, then supported by voluntary contributions. Still more brilliant success crowned the efforts of that indefatigable tutor, Dr. Bock, at Berlin, whose higher academic establishment met with universal applause, and really deserved it for its admirable regularity. During the short career allotted him, he made the fabric of his own raising so to flourish, that the first families at Berlin and other towns,

may several titled ones, cheerfully entrusted their children to his care ; and the promiscuous education of Jews and Christians, not only gave no offence, but was even honored with the sanction of the consistory, and the visiting commissioners appointed by the same. He died in the thirty-second year of his life, universally lamented. There were also other establishments for education which co-operated in the general introduction of a better system of training youth ; and even the rabbinical foundations began to see the expediency of respecting, besides their principal study, preparatory information also.

All that while, Ben David continued operating with his writings, and David Friedländer braving advanced age, was as vigorous and ready as ever in devoting himself to the service of the community. As elder of the congregation he had great influence ; and as a man of active habits he was employed also in municipal offices. Both his and his worthy friend Lieberman Schlesinger's discreet activity, gained them personally the highest esteem, and contributed very much towards the amendment of the Jewish lower class. The Hebrew muse once more inspired Friedländer, for three years longer in the new *Gatherer*, although still sounding only in faint echoes. The German language had too firmly established its ascendancy,



for modern spirits to prefer the oriental harp; their feelings already belonged to a new fatherland, and found no longer any expression in the defunct language. However pamphlet-writers might declaim against the naturalization of the Jews, it was completed ere yet the law sanctioned it. Jews served in the national guard, their lives were consecrated to their king and country; they entered the army and fought courageously, they loved the soil and the empire, where they were allowed to follow their tenets without humiliation. They were no longer parted from the country; they frequented its gymnasiums, universities, and the *Ateliers* of its artists. Husbandry and mechanical trades only were still denied them. When, in March 1812, there appeared the wise royal edict, completing the work of emancipation, and deciding the many years' contested question, by the following regulation.

The Jews in the ancient Prussian states are considered natives and Prussian citizens, on condition that they shall adopt family names, and, in all transactions, make use of the German or some other living language. They shall enjoy equal rights and privileges with the Christians. They shall be eligible to academical, and also to parochial offices. They shall be at liberty to live in any part of the state, acquire landed property, exer-

cise any lawful trade, and follow any lawful business. The Jews shall have to pay no additional taxes, but must bear all the charges and duties alike with other citizens. They are subject to military service. Their marriages are not liable to any impediments, only a foreigner cannot acquire the right of citizenship by marrying a native. They are not to have any separate laws, except in matters of divine worship and ritual usances; but without a retrogressive force. They shall not be allowed a jurisdiction of their own. Finally the government reserves to itself the necessary determinations about the conditions of the church, and improving education amongst the Jews, in considering of which, it shall avail itself of the assistance of confessors of the Jewish religion, known for ability and integrity, and hear their opinion.

This edict excited enthusiasm in the Jews already sufficiently prepared. Now they were natives,\* and natives they would be, while the holy war† offered them abundant opportunity to manifest their love of their sovereign. Young

\* The German word *Landeskinder*, children of the country, is far more expressive than the English word, *natives*. *Natives* they had been, and their fathers before them; but no children of the country.

† The first French Invasion.

men joined the army: not one of them showed cowardice; many of them who had arrived at preferment, and were decorated with tokens of reward, died for their country; many returned home honoured and respected. Amongst the general excitation, parents sacrificed their darling children to danger, their substance to the wounded and other sufferers by the war; nay, their time and health in nursing the sick. The name "Prussian," extinguished all difference of religion, and the king acknowledged the noble efforts of all alike by praise and badges of honour.

Thus the dispositions were fused into brotherly love; and also, during the succeeding leisure, vulgar aspersion missed its aim. The second period of war drew the bond of union among the subjects still tighter; and at the subsequent general peace, the salutary effects of correct statistical views became conspicuous in the new relations of the Jews, and prospered more and more.

The 16th article of the Act of the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, runs thus: "The Congress will consider of the best possible manner of effecting a uniform civil amelioration of the followers of the Jewish religion throughout Germany; and particularly of granting them the enjoyment of civil rights in the allied states, in return for their taking

upon themselves all civic duties. Meanwhile it guarantees unto the confessors of that faith, the rights already granted them by single states of the alliance." That article, although not yet generally carried into execution, establishes an epocha, such as there never has been another in Jewish history. The Jews are determined to deserve what they have already gotten, or what they may yet obtain,—the rights of man; they feel themselves urged to be their own reformers, that they may conciliate their destiny. A reform of the Jews, then, has set in, and it is being pursued with consciousness; it is already as evident in Prussia and Austria, as it is in those countries where once French sway sowed good seed, and where, on the return of the legitimate sovereign, the superior exotic shoots were not torn up again. In Sardinia, and the Pope's dominions, the Jews are retrograding along with the states themselves. Not so in the greater states of Germany, particularly in high-risen Prussia, where the Jews are willingly suffered to refine, and freely unfold themselves. There Mendelssohn's spirit is still about. In all the provinces of the Prussian empire, not even excepting the larger towns in the duchy of Posen, there more or less prevails an active disposition to reform; and every where the fruit thereof, appears very forward. Every where we behold small and



large societies uniting for the purpose of forming good mechanics, husbandmen, and other useful citizens; and, within a few years, we find the number of formally incorporated Jew master-tradesmen, almost out of proportion, who all bear a character for industry and integrity. No one any longer wins the regard of his co-religionists by the length of his purse, if his wealth be not the product of industry, and its possessor's conduct irreproachable; and although the influence of pecuniary resources is the same all over the world, they know better than to confound necessity with esteem and respect: the latter are considered due to the useful and honourable man only. But we also frequently meet with both united, and many of the rich make sacrifices, for the sake of having their brethren converted into beings available for the public good; and they so highly value industry, arts and sciences, that they destine also their own children to them, esteeming the deficiency in capital, little in comparison with what they accumulate of real worth. Youth, who will not comply with that spirit, meet with no preferment; and the same as heretofore, the term "Jewish," was constantly applied by Christians to Jews with contumely, so the Jews now make use of it themselves, by way of reproach to those, who, from inherited prejudice, dislike to

work, pride, or other defects of education, will not accommodate themselves to any employment for the public good. Usurers are profoundly despised.

Animated by that spirit, the Jews have seen the necessity of founding good elementary schools, calculated to lead youth from subtle Talmudical plodding, back to the simple elements of good education, and render them fit for all regular callings of life ; to preserve them from the silly conceitedness which frequently makes Talmudists think themselves in possession of universal knowledge ; and also to keep the less talented from studies, which cannot be compassed without due preparation, and, therefore, rather deaden the mind than enliven it. In this the governments seconded them, by suffering none but approved teachers to be appointed ; and although there still exists too great a lenity in this respect, yet the Jews became more and more sensible of the need of having better teachers, and gradually learn to discriminate between fair and false pretensions. Nay, the Talmudists themselves have already seen the necessity of a reform of the instruction of youth ; and at Berlin, the late Chief Rabbi, *Weil*, assented to the establishing of a Rabbinical seminary, with preparatory elemental classes, and himself collected subscriptions for the same.

Meanwhile the Berlin free-school, too, has

passed into the hands of the congregation, and is very diligent in giving boys an education suitable for the middle and working class. Already good elementary schools are, the same as there, established in all rather numerous congregations throughout the kingdom ; and where they had not the means to do so, they endeavoured to introduce, at least, better religious instruction ; and although no fixed *norma* be established for the same, it is every where easily founded on the books of holy writ, which convey the purest and sublimest conceptions even to youth, and guard them from false enlightening.

In more liberally educated youths, who devote themselves to the arts and sciences, one very distinctly perceives the fruit of noble aspirings. Self-taught geniuses, after the example of Mendelssohn, formerly so abundant, but which, however admired, seldom advance to sound polymathy, gradually disappear, and along with them, a certain vain, and deservedly ridiculed self-sufficiency. They choose for youth the slower but surer way of good schools and classic preparation. As they mostly study from free choice only, they distinguish themselves by their diligence ; and the directors of gymnasiums give most Jewish students a testimony of industry and propriety of conduct ; the same as at the universities, they, upon the

whole, do not come behind others; and when academical theses are proposed, such of them as become competitors, now and then furnish distinguished performances, and carry off the prize. Only those who come from Poland to study at the German universities, are not always properly prepared; and that very circumstance proves the importance of judicious regulations on the part of the state, and the advantages resulting from them in respect to education.

Then as such a number of men of sound faculties, and more and more commendable aspirations, lawfully exist in the state; and as their extinction cannot well be a statistical object, it needs becomes the states province to make of the whole body the most it may; therefore to afford it every means for its inner improvement, as also facilitate the application of, and preserve from abuse, every project consistent with the progress of the times.

“Now look here, upon this picture, and on this;”

The German Jews, generally, were of one and the same character. With the exception of a few, who had received at Vienna some external impressions, and brought them with them to Berlin, it may be said that they all bore one stamp, whereby they certainly merited the name of “a



People" independent of inner carnal affinity. What that stamp consisted in, cannot be precisely said, as it formed the totality of several appurtenances imperceptible themselves, the blending of which, only produced just that quality. That it must not be sought for in the tenets and maxims of Judaism, is evident from the contrast between the German and Portuguese and Oriental Jews, although their principles are not unlike. They almost appear two different original nations. With the former, the case of their peculiar character is obvious. True national pride, grounded on intelligence, conduct, and knowledge; or the surmounting of stupendous fatalities it is, which, at all times, elevates the mind, and the tradition of which serves as a means to preserve the whole. This cannot be said of the German Jews. They had to do with mediocrity only; they never could unite for any grand action; they were always only individuals, every one doing the best for himself, and out of the individuals communities gradually arose. Whence then their general character? This question has occupied many, both of the lettered and unlettered, and produced a number of works for and against the Jews, in which mere single facts are exhibited as characteristic, which, however, could not be so. Since the beginning of the last century,

until beyond the middle of it, there was a deluge of publications on the Jews, and principally on their character; nay, now and then, some very voluminous ones; \* but none solved the question.

Chaffery, sharpening, usury, and an aversion to labour, has been almost every where given out as a characteristic of the Jews; and thus from the trade of many amongst them, if not of all, from the misdeeds of individuals, the absurd concessions of governments on the one hand, and their cruel restrictions on the other, false conclusions were drawn. The innumerable ceremonies, antipathy to Christians, stubbornness and other circumstances, were also included, and not altogether unjustly, as appurtenances. That the picture was not perfectly drawn, every one was sensible of; and the more and more evident partiality in the delineation, even caused that great number of writings; only they were all affected by the same evil, and, in truth, there is nothing more difficult than to fully characterize a mass of men, just gone forth from a history of development, that had been almost unknown; who are not able to delineate themselves, nor yet can be brought to do it. However, the main point is this: the German Jews became what they were, through

\* See Wolff Bibl. Hebr. Script. anti Jud. recent. — Schudt and others.

the training of youth, which, under all circumstances, could not turn out otherwise.

Nor do we mean to venture on a complete and minutely finished picture; we shall give only some outlines which will sufficiently mark the lights and shades. The German Jews are the product of history; and, therefore, upon the whole, innocent of their character. They formed, from the beginning, a passive mass, now quite kept under, and now suffered to increase; now conglomerating and now scattered, containing few component parts of its own, and always more or less mixed with foreign. Their spirituality, their religion, and the laws interwoven with it, they had; it was their inheritance; and owing to books imported from abroad, it tolerably well continued the same; it was the only thing on which they were actively employed, equally with naturally instinctive propagation. As such, they stood opposed to Christendom, not as hostile to the state, as under the first Cæsars; not as persecutors of the Christians, as in the times of the fathers of the church; not as adversaries of Christendom, as in Moorish Spain; not as slave-dealers, as in the beginning of the middle ages; not as marrers of the progress of Christianity and abettors of heresy, and certainly not as vagrants, rogues, bloodthirsty and otherwise vicious men; for the law itself en-

deavours to prevent all that; and truly, in all other countries, the Jews were, on an average, getting better livelihoods. They were admitted, and tolerated—by the clergy, with a view of converting them; by statesmen, with a view of availing themselves of them. The former could not possibly succeed; for what nation has ever been converted from its own religion to another by mere instruction? State regulations only will change by force, or gradually the mind of a nation, through educating youth for the purposes of the state, through encouragement, reward of success, and strict watchfulness. This was impossible with the Jews at large; they were too much scattered for that. The state tried it with individuals; but that had no effect on the whole: it therefore judged best to avail itself of them, just as it found them. The ancient councils had dispossessed the Jews of landed property, they intimidated and circumscribed them, threw them upon themselves, and left them no other livelihood than lending money on interest. The state allowed them to take very high interest, in order that they might disgorge the best part thereof to itself; they seemingly fared well by it, were protected in return, and had not to work for their living; they were prepared for removing at a moment's notice, if needs must be; this was the case often enough,

and that rendered usury the dearer to them. Rights they had none ; the legal recovery of their contracts was more the concern of the state than their own. They themselves could only breathe and live.

This became odious to the Christian subjects, they lost by it ; but the Jews got nothing by that loss. At times, therefore, states and particularly the free towns, felt little regret to drive away a mass of Jews ; and just as little did the Jews collectively feel to leave parts where they earned nothing, and where they rendered no services. Individuals favoured by fortune or by their own wits, would even soon regain admission ; and all the policy they then had to observe, consisted in subtly concealing the public loss. Jews not monied enough for usury, were allowed to go about the country trafficking and peddling, whereby the state got body-tolls, night-quarter-money, safe-conduct-dues, &c. They were in the most penurious condition, and led a life than which nothing could be more wretched ; they even stood in the light of one another, and brotherly hatred took sooner root amongst them than brotherly love. To the richer, they were a nuisance, and often also their tools. In short, in that state, the Jews did not learn to know the value of arts, sciences, and real industry ; the

value of money only was evident to them ; at that only they were suffered to aspire, and its acquisition made amends for suffering. A few Rabbis sufficed for the care of religious affairs : they might be cheaply enough imported from Poland, and they had constantly to answer the questions of the illiterate. Unacquainted with the spirit of religion, every one was contented with being led by the Rabbis, thinking that then he could not possibly err, Hence the unlimited rabbinical sway.

Thus humbled as a slave, the Jew remained entirely assigned to himself, a child of habit, and subject to constant foreign influence, which however, could but slowly change the subsisting order of things. Christian rancour revived at every recollection of the crucifixion of Christ ;\* it drew nourishment from the just complaints of Jewish practices. Taunted by children and insulted by adults, the Jew was obliged partly to endure, partly to seclude himself ; his house was his fortress, retirement his defence. Even the tenderest infant observed his father constantly hide himself and his effects ; it accordingly contracted the character of cowardice and craftiness already at the very first stage of life. How could a Jew venture to give his child a fair, liberal humane education, and send him to schools to be prepared for the higher sciences ? He would thereby open his eyes

\* See note at the end of this article.

to the prevailing calamity, render him still more unfortunate by the consciousness of his ill-fate, ere yet the power of bearing it was steeled by habit; or give him an opportunity to escape it, to desert, and turn traitor to his religion and to his people. Conformable to those circumstances therefore, the education was homely, contracted, ritually-godly to an extreme, and withal inuring to concealment.

With Christians, the Jew had intercourse mostly for the purpose of business, which, with the settled and seldom travelling Jews, consisted almost in none but money transactions and frippery; a few carried on a wholesale trade in merchandize, by special licence. Through the former business, the Jew formed acquaintance with hardly any but inordinately living Christians, who were in want of means to carry on their concerns, having been careless with their capital, or squandered their superfluities, so that they were constantly hampered, and obliged to raise money at usurious interest, or dispose of their effects far below their value. The better sort of the nation have no need for such shifts; for the steadier a person is, the easier he may command the needful for his business. The Jews therefore came in contact only with the dissipated part of the German nation; they outweighed them in sense and judgment, and thence learned to look upon the Christian with contempt; his

abusing them was little cared about, knowing as they did, that he was only venting his chagrin at his own imbecility. This wrought in them a certain pride, which cringing to their cowardice, degenerated into that overweening for which they have been so frequently censured.

The Jews therefore fain associated together in their own streets, seeking no intercourse with Christians, chuckling amongst themselves over their preponderancy, caring little or nothing about the manners of the world, purity of language, bodily or mental cultivation, attending to the exercise of their common religious observances only, and sallying forth every day to look out for business. The Hebrew language proved an auxiliary to them. Knowing of German hardly any but the words required in business, the deficiency was supplied with corrupt Hebrew ; by which they concocted a vile idiom of but small compass, wherein they expressed themselves with the most impact brevity ; and which they brought the more into practice, as they could converse in it in the hearing of Christians, without betraying themselves. Even their books, letters, promissory notes and receipts were all written in that idiom. Christians tried in vain to penetrate into that secret, to compose Jewish-German grammars, and revealed many an expression. To the citizens, it continued to remain



unintelligible. Yet in the middle of the last century, a Jewish child's reading a German book was reckoned amongst the highest offences; even the Jewish German idiom was allowed to be written in Hebrew characters only; whatever was put into the hands of youth as exercises in reading, contained either religious matters or the most absurd legends. The Jewish-German paraphrase of the Pentateuch, which Rabbi Jacob Ben Israel published 200 years ago under the title of *Zenah-arenah* was a work for the improvement of females, and went through innumerable editions. It is the zenith of preposterousness; and a reference to any part of the book, will shew how insensible one must become to every taste of the polite world, to whom the like appears agreeable if not sacred. Through such means, then, the female sex was debarred from reading German books, and did not learn the German language, for which they never had any occasion. Some made themselves mistresses of pure Hebrew, and were highly pleased with their learned outside.

Now, if it be considered that in the very same country where all this took place, the ancient Greek and Roman authors were read with avidity by the Christians, the high-German tongue and its beauties more and more cultivated, and the politer manners and phraseology of their western neigh-

bours more generally adopted ; this retrogression of the Jews must be the more striking, the more numerous they were in the cities. The distance between the two religious sects could not therefore but appear immense in every respect. Was it not already perceivable enough between those Jews and their Portuguese brethren ?

That morals must suffer from this stifling of all external and internal cultivation admits of no doubt ; even the established position of the Jews with regard to the generality, was an immoral one. How much more then must ignorance, separation, and the perpetual conflict between craft and contempt, degrade all morality ? Seeing how rare it is amongst the lower orders of the people, even when well governed ; how much rarer then must it be amongst a class of men so repudiated, so abandoned to inward depravity ? That cheating, knavery, thieving, and an addiction to gambling was then observed in many of them, is not to be denied. Who does not discover in this the effects of wrong state regulations ?

The more liberal-minded ecclesiastics thought they might check the evil, by turning their attention to the conversion of the Jews. Their design deserves acknowledgment, although religious zeal frequently carried them too far. But they forgot that in order to effect frequent desertion to the

Christian faith, it should be preceded by a renunciation of predominating nationality. In Spain, formerly, highly cultivated Jews could with far greater facility be gained for Christianity. When baptized they instantly ceased to be Jews, and became Spaniards; their talents paved them the way to high offices, and their accomplished manners, to matrimonial alliances, and intercourse with the great. Their former condition was soon consigned to oblivion. But what was a German Jew of the usual cast after baptism? Letting alone the feigned conversion, he mostly was, as to language and manners, still a raw Jew, unfit both for office and good society, and one who could not possibly divest himself of earlier impressions. The Jews had their own national customs, to which most people are even stronger tied than to their religions, Who has not felt the fascinating charm of frolics regularly returning every year, the standing jests, the usual games, particularly in a select and not very numerous circle? Even long after we have ceased to participate in them, those joys live in our memory; and the solitarily living Jew, the invalid confined to his room, the tottering greybeard, would still delight in the reminiscences resuscitated at every recurring season. To this must be added certain national songs to set melodies, which, however barbarous the composition, will never die

away even with him of a subsequently more refined taste. Again, on particular days, certain dishes and drinks founded on some traditional jest, which things one ever after continues partial to ; certain puns and allusions, adages and quaint sayings, which one is pleased with in those just about one, because they are taken from real popular life and not out of books ; nay a certain tone of voice, a certain gait, and in general every thing which characterises a distinct mass of men as such, and of which not a single item will be found wanting with the Jews in any part. Amongst such a mass, speech, both as the enunciation of thoughts and the enunciation of feelings, obtains a meaning of their own ; and in all its forms, except those natural to the accepted phraseology of business, the most vexing difference appeared, which spoiled social intercourse, sometimes not unwished for. When in the common outbreking of joy or grief, the Christian called upon the name of Jesus, he excited horror in the breast of the Jew prepossessed against the founder of Christianity ; and when in similar cases, the Jew vented his emotions in half-Hebrew or bad German exclamations, the Christian could not refrain from laughing. Accordingly they never coincided in feeling, if the subject were ever so apt to excite the same sensation in either. Tasteful relaxations of a higher order, as Plays,

Concerts, Balls, &c., the Jews did not fancy much. Either too frugal, or too bigoted, or too unsusceptible, and living for religion only, they considered all that (*Hebel*) folly. Still they did not by any means spurn similar recreations amongst themselves, if concomitant with religious solemnities, as at weddings, middle-holidays, &c. ; nay, at the Purim festival, bands of them would perambulate the streets in masquerade, not minding being unmercifully bantered by the rabble, so that they could have their fun. Those masqueraders frequently performed dramatic pieces, the subject of which was the discomfiture of Haman ; most egregious productions, in which the very hero, Mordecai, figured as a buffoon of the lowest description. In many places those fooleries occasioned disturbances, particularly when the Purim feast happened to fall in the Christian passion week, which made the authorities put a stop to them. Still, such was the reluctance to part with them, that the practice maintained itself beyond the period alluded to, and even unto our days. By those instances, we only want to intimate, how estranged the Jews were to the body of the German nation ; and we think we need not refer to other occasional customs, such as at weddings, circumcisions, burials, &c. for stronger proofs of the peculiarity of the Jewish world.

All this, mere baptism could not wash off; it could not even extinguish immorality. For experience teaches that a converted thief went on stealing; and a converted cheat was still a cheat, with this difference, that he had been guilty of one more imposture, in confessing another faith. The endeavors of a Wagenseil, an Edzard, a Kallenberg, and other divines, were successful only with such Jews as a school education had used already early to think, and who, through intercourse with Christians, were in some measure withdrawn from their own people. But German Jews sending their children to Christian schools, or their being received in them, must be placed among the extraordinaries. Instances of exceptions, we meet at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, where, in 1620, the two Jewish physicians placed each a son in the Gymnasium, as did in 1672, another physician there, and one at Worms. In their own schools (if so they may be styled), nothing was to be learned but reading and writing, Hebrew and Jewish-German; the first rudiments was mostly taught by the reader, and withal killer or butcher of the congregation, or by persons absolutely unfit for any other calling. Hence these pedagogues stood in no esteem at all, and at times were obliged to lend themselves to the meanest offices. At the higher seminaries at Frankfort, Fuerth, and Prague, Talmud only was

studied. Even the works of the Spanish Hebrew philosophers were reserved for private lucubrations.

The German Jews were in possession of only a single art, which they brought to a wonderful perfection; namely, seal engraving, and lithography, in which some distinguished themselves to a high degree.\* As a masterpiece in that art, we name the renowned performance of Levin Joseph, at Berlin, who in the reign of Frederick I, most elaborately engraved the royal arms surmounted by a crown, on a diamond of twenty-five carats. He executed many more magnificent articles, and several of his kinsmen before and after him, were very skilful in that art. Besides that, the Jews much cultivated also calligraphy, although mostly for religious ends, as for writing the Torah manuscripts used in the synagogues, phylactery and doorpost scrolls (Tphillim and Mesussoth) but here and there also for secular purposes. It may be said that by simplicity of taste, which, by the by, is prescribed

\* Until the latter part of the last century, the whole process of preparing raw diamonds and other precious stones for ornamental use, such as splitting, cutting, and polishing them, as likewise the delicate and hazardous art of drilling pearls, was almost exclusively exercised by the Amsterdam Jews, who were employed by many a crowned head, and to whom several of the celebrated diamonds now in existence, owe their external perfection.

to them, they preserved the Hebrew character very clear and distinct. However, through the multiplicity of that art (if it be acknowledged as one) it declined in estimation, and, at last, a *Sopher* (Calligrapher) was usually a poor man, and but little thought of. There existed amongst the Jews also performers on musical instruments, and other artists of a minor rank; and even in music they did not, at that time, rise above mediocrity. Many of those itinerant musicians travelled about the towns and villages, earning a scanty livelihood by their art, as is still the case in some parts of Poland and Bohemia. As to singing, the Jews boasted of being good vocalists; and although there seldom was found amongst them a properly cultivated voice, and hardly any acquaintance with foreign compositions, still they possessed a style of singing peculiar to themselves, which was wont to adapt itself to synagogue service, and which, with all the difficulty of criticising it by the established rules of music, is not altogether destitute of beauty; where it has traditionally preserved its original character, it is worth being noticed by connoisseurs. Finally, the German Jews (we never heard this of any other) had their regular jugglers, jesters, and rhymsters, who attended at all family festivities to entertain the company. They were the *ne plus ultra* of ab-



surdity; the more preposterous their farces, the more nonsensical their extemporaneous versifying, the more laughter they excited, and the more extended became the fame of those comic *Improvisatori*, who even journied in their profession.\*

As to the honour of the Jewish nation, the perfecting, or at least the polishing of the Hebrew language, the further diving into the sense of Holy Writ, the imitating of ancient authors in forcible fictions, the transplanting of foreign philosophical theories on Hebrew ground, the improving of the art of printing, and several others, for which they once were famed, as working in gold and silver, silk and woollen weaving, &c., they mostly left to their Portuguese brethren, and those in the Barbary states and in Turkey, who accordingly were more respected, and well deserved to be so.

The alteration which a good deal of all this has undergone during a subsequent period, would excite astonishment, if the cause of it were not so very obvious, and at the same time appearing in evidence, that suitable arrangements by philanthropic governments contain the best means of transforming men. Now, the whole task set to governments, consists merely in this: that the

\* Every thing related here, the author knows from authentic tradition; and several remains of those times he yet saw himself. So has the Editor.

feeling of natural fitness for the offices of a citizen of the state, be awakened and raised in the hitherto oppressed and neglected mass, by a free and gradually widening sphere of civic activity; that in the regulations adopted, there be no constraint put upon conscience; and that the consolidation of religious and civic principles do principally arise from the education of youth. All this will be so much clearer and plainer, when it is known that the same circumstances still prevail, in those parts where no such arrangements have been made.

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*Note.*—When, in the 14th century, the Crusaders returned home low-spirited from an unsuccessful expedition, the Jews were the innocent objects on whom they wreaked their anger; and many who happened to dwell on their line of march, fell deplorable victims to their fury. All the chronicles of those times are full of the atrocities perpetrated on the Jews on that occasion. The magistracy of Worms, who were well disposed towards the Jews, because they derived material benefit from them, suggested to them a means of bringing themselves off safe. A missive was

forged, by which the Sanhedrin, or the Great Council at Jerusalem, asked the opinion of the sages of the city of Worms, how they should act with regard to Christ. To which the Worms sages replied, that they should not on any account crucify Christ.\* As the Worms magistrates confirmed the authenticity both of the missive, and the answer thereto, and no such thing as historical criticism being yet known in those days, the Worms Jews were declared innocent, and left unmolested.

That same letter has been a subject of great research and controversy. Not to be mistaken,

\* “ Mais ceux de Worms prétendant avoir donné de bonnes preuves à l'Empereur et aux Etats de l'Empire, qu'ils n'ont jamais eu de part au crûcifixement de Jesus Christ ; c'est dans cette vue qu'on a inseré dans le *Toldos Jeschu* p. 92 l'extrait d'une lettre que le Sanhedrin de Worms écrivit au Roi de Judée pour l'empêcher de faire mourir Jesus Christ. ‘ Laisser aller ce Jesus, ne le tuez point, qu'on le nourisse jusqu'à ce qu'il contracte quelque tâche et qu'il se souille lui même.’” i. e. “ However, the Worms Jews pleading that they had given the Emperor and the states of the Emperor satisfactory proof that they had never had a hand in the crucifixion of Christ ; there was for this purpose inserted in *Toldoth Jeschu*, p. 92, an extract of a letter written by the Worms Sanhedrin to the King of Judea, to prevent his putting Jesus Christ to death. ‘ Let that Jesus alone, do not kill him ; let him be maintained until he contracts some blemish, and defiles himself.’”—*Basnage Historie des Juifs*. lib. vii. cap. ix. § 13. p. 258.

and evident, as the fabrication thereof may be, yet it has been thought authentic by some; and the Worms Jews have so frequently told one another that story, that most of them actually believe it, and (suppressing the true particulars of the case) caused it to be inserted in the book called **מעשי נסים** or an account of the marvellous events which happened at Spires, Worms, and Mayence, written in Jewish German. Both Hulderich and Basnage think that the letter was invented by enemies of the Worms Jews, on purpose to render them odious and suspicious, as friends of the Christians, to their own brethren, by whom they were much esteemed. However, the story seems most likely as it is told above. For the rest, the Worms Jews stood particularly high with the Christians; and their moral life gave rise to the saying: "Worms Jews, honest Jews." They also had a Jew court of Law consisting of members of their nation.

When the Jews at Ulm saw how fortunately their co-religionists had got over their difficulties, by means of an ingenious fiction, they also had recourse to a falsehood, as a protection from the savageness of their persecutors. They asserted that they had been sojourning in those parts ever since the first destruction of the temple of Jerusalem; and could, therefore, have had no share in

the persecution and crucifixion of Jesus. As a proof of it, they produced a letter, which they pretended their ancestors had received from the Jews at Jerusalem. It was originally written in Hebrew; and the German translation ran thus:—

“To our brethren sojourning in the parts beyond the sea, to the Jews of Ulm, in Suabia, the Jews dwelling at Jerusalem, in Judea, and in the land of Canaan, send greeting.

“We justly offer fervent thanks to God for having delivered us from a great trouble. We make herewith known unto you, that we have exterminated from the number of the living, that wicked enticer, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. As we could no longer bear with his reviling and blasphemy, we accused him to the Roman Prætor, who, after he had heard our accusation, and thought the same well-founded, caused him to be well scourged, and to be nailed to a cross, as he richly deserved. His disciples were dispersed, and driven out of the city.”

We do not know whether this letter proved of any service to the Ulm Jews. However, according to some accounts, it is said to have been found, when in the year 1348, they were burnt, and their property was confiscated. Probably the unfortunate beings then sought to evade their fate by

producing the document, in order to demonstrate that their ancestors could not possibly have been accessary to the executing of the Saviour of the Christians, and that, therefore, the rancour of the latter, had no grounds to justify it.

That the Ratisbon Jews also pretended to possess similar letters from Palestine is sufficiently proved by several Ratisbon chronicles. When, in 1529, the Jews were driven out of that city, such letters are said to have been found, as also a fragment of the stone tables of the law, which Moses smashed to pieces.

Eusebius (ad Esaias cap. 18. v. 2.) recounts that the Jerusalem Jews did notify to the synagogues all over the world the execution of the founder of Christianity.



**A CATALOGUE**  
**OF THE WORKS OF**  
**MANASSEH BEN ISRAEL.**

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*Page 78.*

**NISHMATH Chaim**, four books concerning the Immortality of the soul; wherein many notable and pleasant Questions are discussed and handled, as may be seen by the Arguments of the particular chapters, prefixed to the book in Latin. Dedicated to the Emperor Ferdinand III.

**Pene Rabba**, upon Rabot, of the ancient Rabbins; in Latin and Spanish.

**Conciliatoris pars prima in Pentateuchum.**

**De Resurrectione mortuorum libri tres.**

**Problemata de Creatione.**

**De Termino Vitæ.**

**De Fragilitate humana, ex lapsu Adami, deque divino in bono Opere Auxilio.**



**Spes Israelis.** This is also in English.

**Orationes Panegyricæ,** quarum una ad illustrissimum Principem Aurantium, altera ad serenissimam Reginam Sueciorum. In Spanish only.

**Conciliator;** the second part, upon the first Prophets; the third part, upon the latter Prophets; ~~the fourth part,~~ upon the Hagio-graphia.

**Chumosh,** or the Pentateuch, with the several precepts in the margin.

**Thesoro de los Dinim;** five books of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Jews, in two volumes.

**Chumosh;** the Pentateuch, with a Commentary.  
**Piedra Pretiosa,** of Nebuchadnezzar's Image, or the fifth Monarchy.

**Laus Orationes del Anno;** the Jews; Prayers for the whole year, translated out of the original.

**De Cultu Imaginum contra Pontificios.** Latin.

**Sermois;** Sermons in the Portuguese tongue.

**Loci communes omnium Midrasim,** which contains the Divinity of the antient Rabbins; in Hebrew.

**Bibliotheca Rabbinica;** together with the Arguments of their Books, and my Judgment upon their several Editions.

**Phocylides,** in Spanish verse; cum Notis.

**Hippocratis Aphorismi,** in Hebrew.

Flavius Josephus adversus Apionem, in Hebrew;

Ejusdem Monarchia Rationis, in Hebrew.

Refutatio libri cui titulus Præadamitæ.

Historia sive Continuatio Flavii Josephi ad hæc  
usque tempora.

De Divinitate Legis Mosaicæ.

De Scientia Talmudistarum, in singulis facultatibus.

Philosophia Rabbinica.

De Disciplinis Rabbinorum.

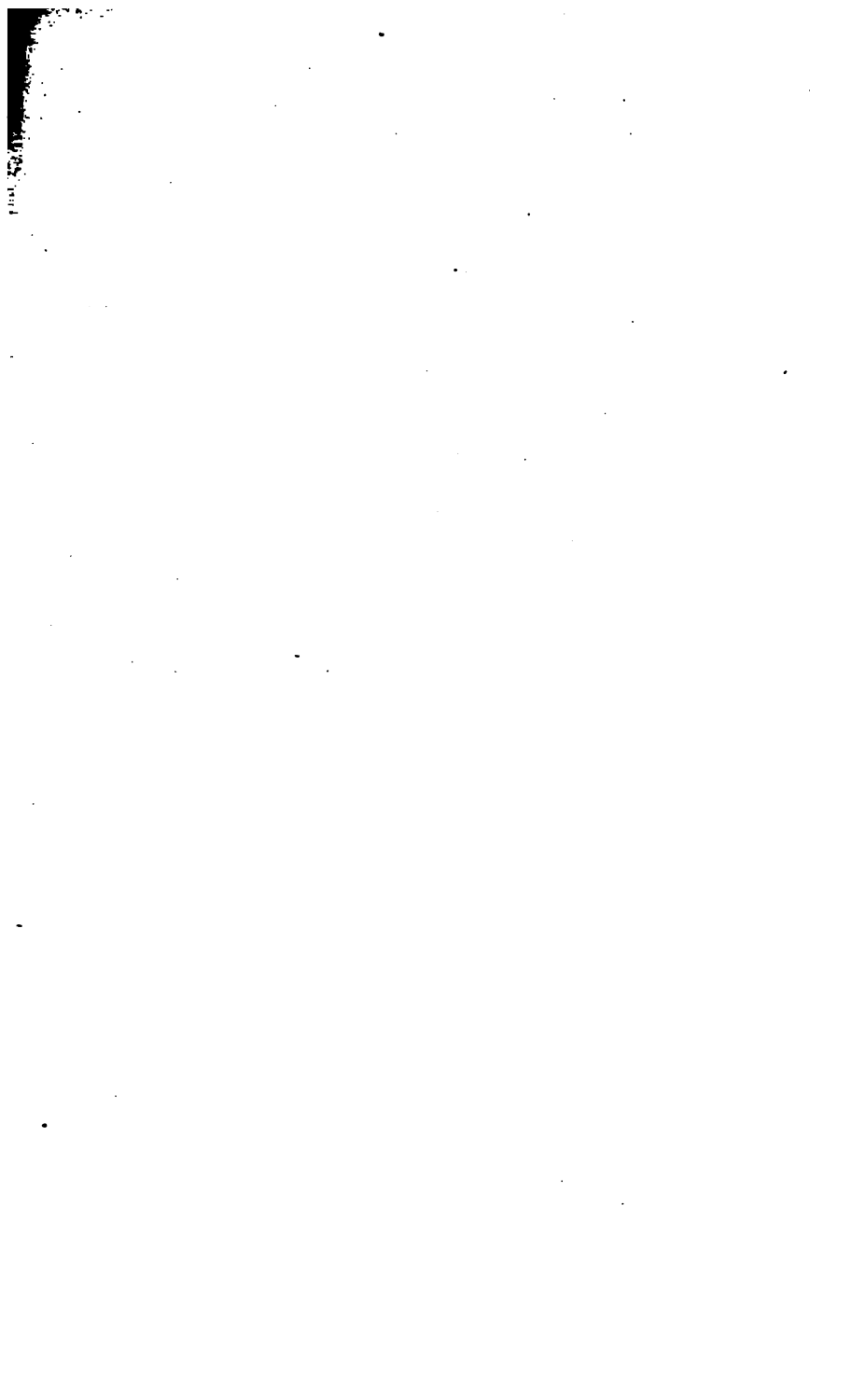
Nomenclator Hebraicus et Arabicus.

THE END.

## ERRATA.

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- Vol. 1. Page 130, line 12. *for* worship his, *read* worship of his  
,, 198, ,, 15. *for* lontrial, *read* long trial  
,, 264, ,, 3. *for* abtain, *read* obtain  
,, 271, ,, 7. *for* universal prevailing, *read* uni-  
versally prevailing  
,, 285, ,, 1. *for* how much of its consuetude, they  
should condemn as abuse, *read*  
how much to consuetude, and  
how much they should condemn  
as abuse  
,, *Ibid.* ,, 15. *for* kept place, *read* kept pace  
,, 304, ,, 14. *for* knowledge ; or, *read* knowledge,  
or



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2

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